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THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION—The Week-end Review. *Incorporating The New Statesman, The Nation and Athenaeum, Week-end Review.*

THE new cheerfulness of the City and the Conservative press is due to a feeling that the British Government is now rearming and in various other ways asserting itself in defence of British interests and that the Spanish war is coming to an end with the "Reds" defeated and destroyed. Though the whole story cannot yet be told, it is clear that in these final stages of the war British and French intervention on Franco's side has played a very important part. The policy throughout has been to await a Franco victory with the hope of British and French influence being predominant at the end of the war. The fall of Barcelona was, therefore, a signal for increased activity by British agents, while the intervention at Minorca was an effort to increase British, at the expense of Italian, influence in the Mediterranean. For some time the utmost pressure has been brought to bear through men like Besteiro to induce the Negrin Government to capitulate, while at the same time requests have been addressed to General Franco to show clemency in his victory. Both efforts have failed. The Republican Government has not surrendered but has been broken up. When the Communists in Madrid are being suppressed in circumstances reminiscent of the Paris Commune, the military Junta will be forced to surrender at discretion. So anxious are the British and French Governments to keep on good terms with General Franco that they are even unwilling to help the refugees in ways that would be distasteful to the Spanish dictator. During these complex manoeuvres, in which British and French influence has helped to accomplish work that would otherwise have cost more Italian lives and the expenditure of much war material, German and Italian pressure on the Democratic Powers is naturally relaxed. Presumably it will be renewed when General Franco is securely in control, as an adjunct of the Axis.

* * *

With these influences at work in the background, the Spanish war is inevitably petering out in a series of desperate efforts, not to defend the Republican cause — that is already doomed — but to save lives or liberties from Franco's vengeance. Dr. Negrin and Señor del Vayo, with other members of the late Government and a handful of the military chiefs, have been driven out of Spain; the Republican fleet is interned and its crews disarmed in Bizerta. What is left of Spain is precariously controlled, as we write, by the hastily formed Junta with

General Miaja at its head. They are at present engaged in dealing with revolts of Communists (or so the messages from Madrid and from Burgos have called them), who are for dying in the last ditch. Their main, and indeed their only, object is to conclude a "humane and honourable peace." No one now can hope for anything better than that, and many will not dare to hope for anything so good. Official pronouncements from Burgos have scoffed at "humanitarian manoeuvres," insisting on a "complete victory" for Franco, and boasting that he will conquer Madrid as he conquered Barcelona. If he is really implacable, if he really thinks of the soldierly Miaja as a "bloody assassin" and is going to reject out of hand all overtures of peace, then we may still see either a last frantic resistance or a rapid collapse and a *sauve qui peut*—to be followed shortly by a reign of terror. To anyone but a Fascist this would seem a strange prelude to a regime which, according to General Franco, is to unite the Spanish people.

The Palestine Deadlock

The Palestine Conference has shuffled on, in the shape of private and mostly informal meetings and talks between the Government and the Arabs and the Government and the Jews. No basis for an agreement has yet been found, and the Government cannot delay any longer in putting forward a positive plan of their own. We do not profess to know what the details of that plan will be; but it seems pretty certain that it will provide for an "independent Palestine," though exactly when full independence is to be achieved will no doubt be a matter for discussion and arrangement. The Jews last week were emphatic in their antagonism to this proposal, if and in so far as it would mean their relegation to the status of a permanent minority, with restrictions on immigration and other measures incompatible with the "National Home." They refused on Tuesday to put forward any counter-proposals of their own; but a hint has been given that they might not be unalterably opposed to the independent State, provided the development of the National Home was not interfered with. In this insistence on their fundamental rights they are fortified incidentally by the strong sympathy of America. But the British Government have obviously got to take account also of the Arabs' insistence on their rights, as well of the serious political situation in the Middle East; and the task of imposing—and maintaining—a compromise settlement is one that bristles with difficulties.

The Struggle in the Far East

There has been nothing decisive in the fighting that goes stubbornly on in the interior of China, nor in the steady but subtler struggle between Japan and the Western Powers. At the moment the Japanese are concentrating on the foreign Concessions at Tientsin, which they are planning to isolate—and if that fails, to blockade. Strong representations were made last week by the British and French Ambassadors in Tokio, and there have been discussions and wrangles between the local authorities and the Consuls-General at Tientsin. There is said to be some prospect—whether there is any solid ground for it, we do not know—of an agreement being reached on the "neutrality" of the Concessions. Meanwhile, on the larger issue, we are glad to learn from Sir John Simon's statement in the House on Wednesday that the British Government, as well as the American, mean business when they talk of supporting China. Two British banks, the Hong Kong and Shanghai and the Chartered, are subscribing between them £5,000,000 to a £10,000,000 exchange stabilisation fund which the Chinese Government are setting up with the British Government's approval, the balance being subscribed by the two Chinese Government banks. The British banks are to receive a Treasury guarantee against any loss that may be incurred as a result of this operation. This move on our part is clearly intended as a reply to the Japanese attempt to supplant the Chinese dollar with a local currency unit exchanging at par with the yen, and designed by Tokio as a method of securing a monopoly of the Chinese import-export trade.

Fissures in Czechoslovakia

Relations between the members of the tripartite Czechoslovakian State appear to be deteriorating. In Slovakia, under the influence of the Hlinka Party, nazification has progressed faster and farther than in Bohemia. The Cabinet at Bratislava has been demanding the right to recruit a separate Slovak Army and has recently sent a delegation to Berlin to negotiate an independent trade agreement in Germany. Strong exception is taken in Prague to these separatist moves, and the Czech Cabinet is reported to have threatened to cut off financial supplies unless Slovakia shows more loyalty to the Republic. Meanwhile, in Carpatho-Ukraine, where renewed Polish and Hungarian pressure for a common frontier has been leading to more talk of secession and definite attachment to the Axis, a Czech General has replaced the Ukrainian Nationalist, M. Revay, as Minister representing the Central Government. His mission is apparently to suppress "Greater Ukraine" agitation in deference to the desires of Poland. These moves have so far been watched passively by Germany, whose present attitude towards Czechoslovakia seems to be one of curiously indifferent neutrality—evidenced, in another direction, by the withdrawal of Herr Kundt, the Bohemian Führer, from Prague to Berlin.

The Split in French Socialism

The debates at the two-day conference held this week by the French Socialist Party revealed very plainly the deep divisions which exist within the movement. The party leaders, in the hope of finding some foundation for an agreed foreign policy, have been pressing the demand that the Government shall take the initiative in calling an international peace conference, at which all claims can be freely discussed. But, whereas M. Blum and the majority hold that such a conference cannot be called unconditionally, but only when threats of force have been withdrawn and Fascist intervention has been ended in Spain, the pacifist minority favours the conference unconditionally, and its strength was shown this week by its number of 3,140 votes out of a total of 7,358. M. Blum thus narrowly carried the day; but the size of the minority leaves him in a very weak position for insisting on his conditions. The plain truth is that the pacifism of a large section of the French Labour movement has been increased by recent experience of British and French policy. Many of the workers fear that Great Britain would treat France as France treated Czechoslovakia in the event of a direct threat from the dictators. Nor do many of the Socialists

care to urge a " firm stand " for the colonies. Therefore there is an important section of the French workers who are now prepared to buy off the Italians with concessions in Africa or elsewhere, and for any accommodation with Germany which will leave the French people alone in its internal affairs.

Research and A.R.P.

The debate on Civil defence showed that great advances have recently been made in the provisions for evacuation and adequate hospital equipment, and, though the wisdom of the steel shelter *cum* basement policy can be questioned, it is at least being carried out seriously. But Sir John displayed a quite unreasonable suspicion of technical innovations, such as the Finsbury scheme, which he seemed to regard as a patent medicine. This stubborn opposition to scientific research and to new ideas in engineering and architecture seems to be widespread not only in the Cabinet but among official experts. In the opinion of foreign technical experts, this country is five years behind the Continent in its knowledge of shelter construction, and it seems clear that, if costly mistakes are to be avoided, much more money and encouragement should be given to research than is given at present. Mr. H. G. Wells startled us recently by his allusion to air-mines. These are still in an experimental stage. We understand, however, that together with developments of radio direction finding, radio control and the photo-electric cell, they might soon, given a period of intensive research, make it difficult for any hostile aircraft to escape destruction. Would it not be possible to elaborate a definite scheme of research co-operation with the other democratic powers, particularly America, France, Switzerland and Holland?

Unemployment

The numbers out of work fell from over two millions in January to just under 1,900,000 in February. When allowance has been made for the abnormal effect of bad weather on the January total, the improvement is mainly seasonal, and the position remains worse than it was a year ago. The building industry, which showed a large improvement on the month, is the largest contributor to the increased numbers out of work in comparison with last year. The cotton and woollen trades, on the other hand, each show a fall in unemployment on last year's as well as on last month's totals; but both iron and steel and engineering remain, in spite of rearmament, well below last year's level of activity. The month's black spot is South Wales, where there has been a further increase in the number of unemployed miners. There will doubtless be some further seasonal recovery in the general level of employment during the next few months, unless a fresh crisis intervenes; but there is nothing to show that the downward tendency of economic activity apart from armaments has been successfully reversed. The Government announces measures to open the Ministry of Labour training centres to unemployed workers at 16 instead of 18 years of age. Hitherto, only the junior centres maintained by some local authorities have been open to workers between these ages. Rightly administered, the change should be beneficial; but nothing should be done to interfere in any way with the essentially voluntary character of the Ministry's scheme.

The Cotton Scheme Gets its Majority

The employers in the various producing sections of the cotton industry have now voted by large majorities in favour of the proposed Enabling Bill, and the leading Trade Unions have also indicated their support. As against this the merchants organised in the Manchester Chamber of Commerce remain predominantly hostile, and the cotton experts in the London Chamber of Commerce also refuse to approve the draft without substantial amendments. The merchants' opposition is natural enough; for they have been able in view of the depressed condition of the industry to play off one producing firm against another, and the formation of what will be in effect a series of producers' cartels will largely undermine their power, even if it does not lead in the long run to the supersession of the independent merchants by sales agencies controlled by the producing interests. The ballot having shown majorities in excess of two-thirds of each main section of the industry in favour of the Enabling Bill, the Government will now presumably introduce the Bill with its blessing, though there may still be modifications designed to modify the merchants' objections. The plain fact is that somehow or other the cotton industry must be reorganised, and that producer-controlled monopoly is the only form of reorganisation on which the Government and the capitalists are likely to agree. The British consumer, of course, will be called upon to pay more; but he need not resent this—if only the benefit accrues sufficiently to the workers in better wages. Cotton trade earnings are lamentable at present; and the Bill ought not to be allowed to go through Parliament without the concession of a living wage to the operatives as a *quid pro quo*.

Prison Reforms

While judges continue to expatiate on the virtues of flogging, the Home Secretary, undeterred by jibes at sentimentalism, is pressing on with his admirable programme of penal reforms. Among these reforms we welcome the decision to demolish Pentonville, and to remove the women prisoners from Holloway and the girls from the Borstal institution at Aylesbury. A site has been chosen at Stanwell, in Middlesex, for a model centre, with large grounds and cottage homes, where women prisoners and Borstal girls will be confined—and confined under conditions very different from those of the old barrack gaol. The centre will be completed and ready for occupation, it is expected, in two years' time. The only serious doubt in the minds of reformers who are expert in this question is as to whether " Holloway women " and " Aylesbury girls " should be mixed, or at least kept in close proximity, on the same estate. We hope that this doubt will be resolved satisfactorily. And we hope also that we shall presently have male as well as female " model centres." The intention is to transfer the occupants of Pentonville to Holloway when the women have gone, and that will be a change for the better. But Holloway is surely a good deal short of the best we can do, if we are going to treat offenders not sentimentally, but sensibly.

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FEUDAL INDIA

FROM Ganges to Thames a chorus of congratulation has blessed Lord Linlithgow's promptitude in saving Mr. Gandhi from suicide and ending his dispute with an obscure and unattractive potentate, known as the Thakor of Rajkot. That ruler need no longer fear that the potent ghost of the Mahatma will haunt the threshold of his palace, and as for Mr. Gandhi himself, he will live to fast another day. Did the Thakor promise reforms and then take back his word? Or was it Mr. Gandhi and not the Thakor who played the autocrat? It does not matter now. This personal controversy will be arbitrated by the highest judicial authority in all India, and we may all be content to leave this matter in his hands.

The broader issue that focused three hundred million pairs of Indian eyes on Rajkot is none the less of the first importance. This tiny State is one of many that fill the region of Kathiawar. It interested Mr. Gandhi especially because his father was its Prime Minister, and he had his schooling there. For the rest of us it is interesting only because it is typical of so much of feudal India. No one, not even the semi-official English press of India, had a good word for this ruler or his system of government. He was a spendthrift on the verge of bankruptcy, and his oppressions had driven his subjects to desperation. As usual there was no regular budget and no fixed civil list, and as usual the people enjoyed no civil rights. The duel between the Thakor and Mr. Gandhi came at the end of a long period of mass agitation, in Rajkot and the neighbouring State of Limdi. On one occasion three thousand men and women had squatted in front of their ruler's palace and fasted for forty-eight hours. The Indian press is filled with detailed narratives of the cruelties that they and others endured. The least of the charges is that they were mercilessly flogged, both in the streets and afterwards in cold blood in prison. But the politically significant part of this story is that the Congress believed and publicly stated that the Thakor wasa cting under pressure from the British Resident. It was he, according to this version of the facts, who advised repression, and he who induced the Thakor to withdraw his original concessions. We are not in a position to form an opinion on these charges, but it is a crucial element in this situation that they are broadcast and accepted. The same pattern confronts us all over feudal India. In a dozen States the agitation for constitutional rights goes on. Everywhere the people content themselves with non-violent protest. Everywhere the answer comes from the *lathi* and the rifle. And everywhere Indians see behind the local rulers the sustaining hand of the Paramount Power. Against it, in the last resort, and not against its Indian puppets the battle is directed.

The timing by Congress of these simultaneous agitations against so many princes is readily understood. The day approaches when the Federal chapters of the new Constitution must come into operation. Every Indian party is opposed to this aspect of Sir Samuel Hoare's charter. The case against it is, first, that it concedes only qualified self-government and that only over a narrow field of public affairs; but in the second place the composition of its Chambers is so manipulated that no popular majority is possible within either of them, and in effect the Paramount Power will always be in control. The ground for this last objection is that the Princes hold the balancing vote. Their representatives will rarely be elected members; the Prince nominates and he is often the obedient tool of the Resident. The Viceroy, in short, is doubly supreme, for not only does he wield a veto, as well as full authority over the reserved subjects; he also commands a balancing vote in both Chambers.

Facing this prospect, the more realistic of India's political strategists incline to sap Imperialism by conquering the States for democracy. If constitutions could be imposed on them by popular agitation, their representatives at the Federal Centre would be the elected spokesmen of the people. Federation would still be exposed to the gravest criticism, but the Federal Parliament, however powerless, would at least reflect India's will to be free. It would speak for her masses, and not for the most reactionary section of her privileged class. The calculation may be precarious. Such an agitation, scattered over innumerable States, cannot hope for rapid success. If the Paramount Power were to back the rulers everywhere, it might register few gains.

On this issue of strategy turns the obscure controversy that is dividing Congress. The Left, led by Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose, is for a frontal attack on the whole scheme of Federation, a refusal to recognise it or to work it, with a return to non-co-operation in every form as the ultimate tactic. Mr. Gandhi and the Moderates seem to veer towards critical co-operation. They might participate in the Federal scheme, if they could first secure democracy, or something like it, in some, if not all the States. For the moment Mr. Bose has won a victory by securing re-election as president of Congress against Mr. Gandhi's influence. The subsequent resignation from the Working Committee of a dozen Moderates gravely weakened his position, but the heaviest blow was the departure, out of personal loyalty to his teacher and friend, of Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru. The Left is influenced by two considerations. Within India it hopes more from the revolt of the peasantry against social and economic wrongs than from any purely political agitation. Again, it sees India in the context of world affairs. Her chance to win effective independence will come, on this view, when the Axis Powers at last provoke the British Empire to make a stand. Many Indians share the view prevalent outside this island that its ruling class is decadent. This is a long-range strategy that appeals to the younger men who have their lives in front of them.

The Government of Delhi, as we read a recent speech by Lord Linlithgow, is prepared to go half-way but no farther to meet Mr. Gandhi. It favours some progress towards orderly and civilised government in the feudal States; it is for a limited Civil List and some minimum grant of civil rights. But it frowns on any general demand for self-government. The *Times* is even more discouraging; it would delay *swaraj* in the States for a generation. This policy, when it is grasped, will obviously weaken the influence of Mr. Gandhi and break the hearts of the older generation. The young men, looking on, will be confirmed in their long-range revolutionary tactics. Here is a new phase of the old policy of dividing to rule. If and when the Axis does deliver its challenge, even its authors may live to regret it. For our own part we would

brush tactics aside, and face this problem on its merits. There is nothing to be said from the standpoint of honest and civilised government for the maintenance of feudal and personal rule. Democracy must come in Rajkot as it has come in Bombay.

FRANCE AND THE RECOGNITION

THE Spanish tragedy is moving to its close. Madrid is negotiating for an armistice, and without much feeling for the *mot juste* the papers say that Negrin and Del Vayo have "run away." Tabouis declares that the *pronunciamento* in Madrid was wangled by the British Consul there. There is no British Consul in Madrid, but only a Vice-Consul; but never mind. In any case, I can well believe it: the Minorca policy is going strong. And I only wonder whether this enterprising "British Consul" is the same gentleman whom I saw in Madrid about a year ago, who spoke to me contemptuously of "the militia, or what they like to call 'the army'"; who praised Franco to the skies; and was obviously in close contact with all the Fifth Column people in Madrid. That was at the time of Teruel, when the prospects for the Republic were fairer than at any time before or since. After Teruel nothing could have defeated the Republic, except two things—(1) a tremendous increase in war material on Franco's side, and (2) a blockade. Both these conditions were to be amply fulfilled in 1938 under the non-intervention system. But that by the way. As for Madrid, I cannot help feeling that if the war was to be lost in any case, it was better that it should be lost without a hundred thousand more deaths.

And now we sit here in Paris waiting for the fruits of France's and Britain's Spanish policy to fall into our laps. The official press is full of optimism. It was optimistic from the very moment M. Léon Bérard went to Burgos. It was optimistic about the agreements he signed there. It proclaimed the appointment of Marshal Pétain as Ambassador to Burgos to be a stroke of genius. According to a Havas message from Burgos, Bérard's last meeting with General Jordana

> was not merely cordial; it was affectionate. General Franco's Foreign Minister shook him by both hands, and said how glad he was to have negotiated with him a settlement of such vital importance.

Judging from Spanish summaries of the Bérard-Jordana agreement, the Franco people had good reason to be pleased. And although no official information was available on the subject in Paris—and it is even said that at the Cabinet meeting of February 27th Daladier, while proposing the recognition of Franco, bluntly refused to disclose the contents of the Burgos agreements—even the Quai d'Orsay has not published any *démenti* of the Burgos version of these agreements. This version said that the French agreed to give everything away—the £7,500,000 of Spanish gold in the Bank of France (which last summer refused to hand it over to the Negrin Government), all the art treasures, all private property sent out of Spain without the consent of its owners; and, last but not least, all the war material brought to France by the Spanish Republicans. This is said to include fifty up-to-date aeroplanes. What the French received in return is a mystery—the Spanish version gave no indication of this. It is certain, however, that neither of the two political conditions on which M. Sarraut and a number of other French Cabinet Ministers insisted was accepted by General Jordana—(*a*) an extensive amnesty, and (*b*) at least a "moral undertaking" of neutrality. It is said that M. Bérard, who is a pro-Francoite, scarcely insisted on the acceptance of these conditions. The *Dépêche de Toulouse*, reflecting the views of M. Albert Sarraut, whose brother, Maurice, is the editor of the great Radical paper of the South, was very indignant about it, and accused M. Bonnet of pursuing a "personal policy" different from that agreed upon at the Cabinet meeting. They were worried at Toulouse by the idea of living near the "third hostile frontier."

But M. Daladier who, in the end, always follows M. Bonnet, got over the difficulty very nicely; in the Chamber, on February 24th, he declared that he was determined to recognise General Franco unconditionally, precisely *because* he did not wish this "third frontier" to be "hostile." When the Cabinet met four days later to approve the recognition of Franco, M. Sarraut said no more. In any case, what more could he say? The recognition had been ratified by the Chamber in advance by a majority of 323 to 261. In the *Populaire* Blum burst into lamentations: "To think that the Front Populaire Chamber of 1936 could have done *that!*" And he blamed the Radicals for following their chief, Daladier, who was now, he said, the real leader of reaction in France. But it was a groan rather than an argument. One need hardly add that Daladier partly justified his decision by saying that the British Government had no intention of delaying the recognition of Franco; while Mr. Chamberlain said in effect a few days later: "We didn't start it; it was the French." The truth is that Daladier read into the British communication of February 22nd precisely what he wanted to read into it—and what Mr. Chamberlain wanted him to read into it. It was hardly worth while for the Labour speakers in the House of Commons to get so excited about it; after all, the whole Spanish policy of Britain and France had been a quibble from beginning to end.

Regarding the Jordana-Bérard agreements, their most extraordinary feature, if the Burgos version is correct, is the French promise to return the war material to Spain—that is, without any guarantee that it would not be dropped into the armament "pool" of the Berlin-Rome axis. It is an extraordinary demonstration of generosity and of French confidence in General Franco. It is doubtful whether, legally, France was in the least obliged to return this war material which had been brought to France by the Catalan army. Moreover, when Bérard returned from his first visit to Burgos, "it was understood," according to the press, that France would keep this war material, with the consent of the Franco Government, and pay for the upkeep of the refugees out of its proceeds. But after that nothing more was heard of this perfectly reasonable proposal; and now Burgos claims that the French have promised to give "back" the war material and—to go on paying for the refugees mostly out of their own pockets. And in return for what? *Mystère.* M. Bonnet, before the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Chamber last Wednesday, threw no light on the subject. In fact, he gave no information at all on the Bérard-Jordana agreements. Instead, he was reported to have said: (1) that resistance in Central Spain had practically broken down and that General Miaja had "disappeared," and (2) that General Franco had told the Italian Commander that he desired the Italian troops in Spain to leave "as soon as possible," and that the Italians were to consider the Barcelona parade as a "farewell review." By the usual leakage system attached to the parliamentary committee meetings, all this cheerful information got into the press, and made first-rate pro-Franco stuff. Only, curiously enough, the French Foreign Office published a "warning" at 1 o'clock in the morning to the effect that the official communiqué on M. Bonnet's statement to the Foreign Affairs Committee could alone be considered "accurate." The communiqué naturally contained nothing about either Miaja or the Barcelona parade. And although the Miaja story was untrue, the *Temps* and other respectable papers printed it in all earnestness—as well as the story M. Bonnet was reported to have told about the Barcelona parade, adding at the foot of the column the Quai d'Orsay's "warning"!

And now for the appointment of Marshal Pétain to Burgos. Pétain is a "national figure" in France if ever there was one, and everybody seems to have had a vague feeling that it was too great an honour to render to General Franco. It was just a little as if Mr. Chamberlain had sent to Burgos a member of the Royal Family. A lot of people felt that it would be scarcely fair to the G.O.M. of the French Army if Franco failed to respond to the French gesture in a worthy manner. French reports from Burgos said that the appointment caused a sensation there and that everybody was delighted. "You

may be slow in taking decisions, but once you do it, you do it well," was one Spanish comment widely quoted in the French press. But did it not sound a little patronising? The Left thought that the spectacular decision to send Pétain to Burgos merely showed that the Bérard mission had been a complete wash out, and that Pétain's appointment was "a desperate remedy necessitated by a desperate situation." And the first official Spanish response to Pétain's appointment has certainly been very disappointing—possibly even humiliating. The Spanish Ambassador to be sent to Paris "in exchange" for Pétain is a gentleman who is to-day nothing more than Mayor of Bilbao, and who, according to *L'Ordre*, was associated for years with Maura and the Madrid paper, the *A.B.C.*, noted for its violently pro-German and anti-French sentiments. This report waits confirmation. The *Jour* is left to console itself with the thought that the Mayor of Bilbao was very nice to M. Bérard, and even treated him to lunch during his first journey to Burgos. And it is reported that the choice of this Ambassador was made by Rome and Berlin, who opposed the candidatures of Quinones de Leon for Paris and of the Duke of Alba for London on the ground that they were monarchists at heart, and not sufficiently anti-French and anti-British. I know there is going to be a battle for supremacy in Spain; but is there anything to suggest to-day that the dice are not heavily loaded against France and Britain, and that the policy which consisted in speeding up a Franco victory has not been, at its best, a desperate gamble? Our Governments will have to be immensely more intelligent than the Germans and Italians to get away with it.

In the meantime the plight of the Spanish refugees is still fearful. Argelès and St. Cyprien are no longer front-page news; but that proves nothing. One gets used to anything in these days; and one forgets very soon. All one knows in Paris is that help continues to be desperately needed. The refugees have been "classified"; 10,000 are described as "ordinary criminals," 40,000 as people who would probably be shot if they went back to Franco; the rest—nearly 300,000—could return safely. But the Spanish frontier is closed; the French are offering to send foodstuffs to Spain if only Franco will take the refugees; but so far he has refused. One wonders what is at the back of it all. The French could have imposed on Franco a decent settlement of the refugee problem; but—if the Burgos report is correct—they have already thrown away all their trumps—the gold, and the war material, and perhaps everything. It does not look as though M. Bérard, M. Laval's great friend, were as *malin* as all that.

Paris, Tuesday. ALEXANDER WERTH

THE L.C.C. JUBILEE

THIS is London's Jubilee—or rather, this is the jubilee of the London County Council, which is the nearest approach to a representative governing authority that London has yet been allowed to possess. We, who in the past two decades have watched London swelling visibly, eating up not only green fields but one neighbouring town or village after another, getting more and more congested at the centre and more shapeless and sprawling at the circumference, have cause to know that our capital city has no government empowered to regulate its growth or to save its citizens from the consequences of its planless development. The area entrusted to the administration of the L.C.C. was manifestly inadequate in 1889, and is quite absurdly inadequate to-day. It was already inadequate when the Metropolitan Board of Works took over in 1855 the area assigned to the Commissioners of Sewers in 1848. Yet, while other cities have been allowed to take in additional territories as they have spread out over the neighbouring country, London has been left to do as best it can with the frontiers of 1848. Moreover, out of the very heart of London is carved the little, now barely inhabited, area over which the unreformed City Corporation still holds sway; for the City Fathers, having been influential enough to save their bacon in 1835, have found little difficulty in repelling later attacks upon their vested claims to go on ruling and dining in the good old ways.

The City, however, matters much less than the rapidly growing Outer London which lies wholly beyond the jurisdiction of the L.C.C. This London beyond the borders now includes well over half the population of the metropolis; and it will soon include much more than half, for the population of the County is falling as more sites are taken for business premises and more inhabitants move, or are moved, into the suburban areas. The L.C.C., as a housing authority, has actually to create its housing estates in alien territory, so that it has no responsibility for the civic services which have to be provided for their denizens. Moreover, the confusion of areas in Outer London leads to additional difficulties. Becontree, the L.C.C.'s greatest housing estate, is divided up between three local authorities. Greater London, with about eight and a half million inhabitants, is governed by six County Councils, three County Borough Councils, 35 Borough Councils, 30 Urban District Councils, four Rural District Councils and six Parish Councils—without counting the 28 Metropolitan Borough Councils or the City Corporation or any of the numerous *ad hoc* bodies which have been established to administer particular services.

This confusion is admittedly ridiculous; yet every attempt to introduce order is certain to be bitterly opposed. The County Councils of the Home Counties fight against any extension of the L.C.C. area because they are afraid of having their rateable values, and therewith their prestige, reduced. The County Boroughs, such as Croydon, insist on maintaining their independence; the lesser boroughs and districts furiously resist absorption. Consequently London goes on growing without a plan; and every attempt to preserve an amenity from destruction results in presenting fresh opportunities to the speculative builder and putting more unearned increment into the pockets of the owners of suburban land.

This confusion of areas and authorities, and the misgovernment to which it inevitably leads, are excellently described by Dr. Robson in a book whose publication coincides opportunely with London's jubilee.* But Dr. Robson is not content to leave matters there; he not only describes the evils but also propounds the remedies. He wants, as everyone ought to want, a Greater London Authority directly elected by the citizens and armed with real powers to plan and co-ordinate the development of the world's greatest city. Some functions of government he wants this unifying body to undertake completely; others he wishes it to supervise, so as to enforce uniform standards while leaving the execution in the hands of lesser authorities covering a smaller area; yet others he would leave these lesser bodies to manage for themselves, without special supervision. But he is convinced that, if any real unity is to be achieved, there must be not only a single co-ordinating body with authority over the entire London Region, but also a considerable reduction in the number of lesser agencies exercising administrative functions within its borders.

Above all, Dr. Robson rightly insists on the necessity of regional planning for the whole area, and of executive powers for the central planning authority. Advisory planning bodies can achieve almost nothing; for a non-co-operative attitude on the part of even a few of the authorities represented upon them can wreck most of their schemes. Moreover, they lack driving force and democratic appeal. Nor will it serve merely to plan the development of particular services. The much-acclaimed Bressey scheme of road reorganisation would, if it were executed without relation to a general plan, end in increasing central congestion and in clearing central sites only to fill them up again promptly with a planless jumble of new buildings. It is impossible, Dr. Robson insists, to plan transport without planning urban development as a whole. What Greater London needs is a general Planning Commission, with

* *The Government and Misgovernment of London.* By William A. Robson. Allen and Unwin. 15*s*.

executive powers, capable of taking resolutely in hand the entire problem of making a new London.

What hope is there that anything of this sort will be done? The question has acquired additional urgency since we have begun seriously to consider what would happen to London in time of war, and to the divers emergency services for evacuation and "civil defence." The problem of defending London must be treated as one and indivisible, even if we refuse so to treat the problem of making London fit to inhabit in times of peace. But will even this need cause us to give London a unifying government? What party will take up so controversial a matter, with the certainty of making numerous enemies and no great hope of finding friends? The government of London is not a party issue; but that only makes it the less probable that any party will face the disagreeable consequences of attempting to clean up the mess. A new Royal Commission would be no more likely to agree upon a solution than the abortive Ullswater Commission which reported in 1923; and, even if a Commission were found to agree, it is practically certain that its recommendations would be shelved by the Government in power.

Underlying the general reluctance to tackle the problem is the widespread consciousness that Greater London ought not to exist at all, with anything like its existing size and shape. It is far too big from every point of view—too big for the Londoner easily to acquire much civic feeling about it, too big not to become hopelessly congested at its centre, and too big not to be constantly getting bigger because of the attracting power of its vast market and its diversified opportunities for both employment and enjoyment. The problem of London is let alone, because it is too big a problem for anyone—except possibly the German Air Force—to tackle with confidence. Most of us would like to see the population of Greater London broken up, the industries largely moved elsewhere—preferably back to the depressed areas—the building of new suburbs replaced by the creation of independent or satellite towns well removed from the built-up area, the entire centripetal tendency removed. But what, short of devastating war, is likely to bring such changes about—even though there is no real economic reason to-day why industries should be crowded in cities, or why London should be preferable to Lancashire or South Wales as a location for new factories?

Indeed, the reform of London's government is the less likely because, within the restrictions imposed by the chaos of areas and authorities, many of the existing bodies carry out their tasks with a good deal of efficiency. The L.C.C. is a remarkably well managed authority, administering its main services in a thoroughly workmanlike way. Many of the Outer London councils, though by no means all of them, are well run; and so are the P.L.A., the London Passenger Transport Board, and, on the whole, the Metropolitan Police. Every one of these bodies is severely hampered in its work by the lack of any unifying plan, or any means of enforcing such a plan if it were drawn up. But, within their limits, they manage pretty well; and accordingly the ordinary Londoner does not become conscious enough of what is amiss to feel any strong conviction of the necessity of thoroughgoing reform. Paradoxically, it might be easier to improve London's government if it were worse governed to-day.

London will, however, certainly be worse governed before long unless its civic organisation is drastically reshaped. For with every increase in the built-up area the difficulties in the way of good government become more formidable. This applies especially to the L.C.C. which finds itself, with a dwindling population and a rateable value that is threatening to decline heavily, compelled to provide services for a rapidly rising day-time population upon which it has no power to levy any contribution towards the costs. In course of time, this anomaly will have to be put right, and it will have to be admitted that there is no way of righting it without the establishment of some sort of Regional Authority. But it is all too probable that before any Government is driven to act, the metropolis will have sprawled planlessly over yet more open country, the L.P.T.B. will have provided yet more suburban transport facilities to increase central congestion, and the jumble of building and rebuilding will have become worse than ever. No one will attempt to refute Dr. Robson's case for a planned Greater London; for it cannot be refuted. Why, indeed, trouble to answer it, when it is so much simpler to admit its validity, and then let ill alone?

A LONDON DIARY

THE information which reaches me about the desperate plight of the Spanish refugees in France reminded me of the admirable letter from Gilbert Murray which was published in the *Times* last Saturday:

> When a large part, and perhaps the most thoughtful part, of the nation is daily and hourly harassed by thoughts of the hideous sufferings inflicted on millions of innocent human beings and the monstrous crimes against humanity which are being daily perpetrated, and perpetrated with success, the Prime Minister somehow leaves the impression—no doubt an unjustified impression—of being entirely indifferent to such issues. His kind words are all for the oppressors: his unkind words for the sufferers. His words of comfort are devoted to showing how this country can, after all, make money out of the agonies of others.

How admirably those words expressed my feelings when I read one morning the kind words to General Franco and then turned to the description—none the less horrible for being so businesslike—which had been sent to a British firm by a commercial agent whose job took him into one of the concentration camps in the South of France:

> At least half of them were suffering from scabies—but sulphur ointment was more or less unobtainable. The two principal diseases rife were typhoid and dysentery. The proper treatment of dysentery was almost impossible, as the correct diet which, I understand, is the main treatment, was not available.

And then perhaps the most terrible passage:

> I mentioned to one relief worker that I understood the death-rate in the concentration camps was not abnormal, and he informed me that the French authorities were taking care that it should not appear to be abnormal by removing from the camps each day those among the refugees who were obviously going to die almost immediately, and allowing them to die in civil hospitals outside the camps.

That is the condition of the men and women and children who relied on the humanity of the democracies. As for the members of the International Brigade, I hear they are interned on a ship with no means of communication with the outside world and fed on bread and water. "A few francs and a visa and we could be free," writes one of them; "we have done nothing wrong—except fight for justice." How much more fortunate were those repatriated by the National Government, even if, soon after reaching England, they did each receive a bill for £3 14*s.* 9*d.* (cost of repatriation).

* * *

Last week the *Daily Express* came out with a demand that we should "give those German colonies back." The argument of the chief Empire Crusader was that these colonies were held in trust and could not be legally appropriated; we now acknowledge that the Germans are "fit to govern" and we have no right to hold their property any longer. It sounds simple. I wonder whether Lord Beaverbrook knows where the German colonies were or who now administers them. I wonder how we are to force South Africa or New Zealand to give up South West Africa or Samoa. The only colonies we are ourselves in a position to give back, are Tanganyika, part of Togoland, and part of the Cameroons. I wonder whether Lord Beaverbrook has thought for whom we hold these territories in trust, and that if we have no legal right to appropriate them, we have equally no legal right to pass them back to Germany? The Natives are described in *Mein Kampf* as "ape-faced men," and according to Hitler's racial theory would be used merely as slaves to work for Nordic Germany. Finally, I wonder whether Lord Beaverbrook would be happy about the increased German navy, which would no doubt be necessary if Germany regained an overseas empire. These questions do not, of course, dispose of the charge that we did

wrong when we took the colonies—even though we called them Mandated Territories. But they suggest that Lord Beaverbrook has at last realised that the Empire cannot be defended in isolation and that he has never really thought about the matter at all.

* * *

The problem is very carefully and ably examined in a forthcoming book called *Empire or Democracy*, by Leonard Barnes (Gollancz, 7*s.* 6*d.*). He discusses four possible solutions: (1) to pass these colonies over to the Nazis, (2) to arm for another imperialist war to defend them, (3) to internationalise or inter-imperialise the colonies, and (4) to take the first steps towards enabling the African Natives to govern themselves. In practical politics the first steps of the fourth policy would involve part of the programme which he calls internationalisation. One of the strongest points in favour of Leonard Barnes's policy, which is after all in one form or another also the official policy of Labour and Liberalism, is that we should take the initiative instead of waiting for another crisis. Clearly the Powers that do possess empires and which claim to be democratic (and that includes the United States) should get together and sincerely apply their democratic professions to their colonial empires. Otherwise they hold these territories, as Lord Beaverbrook suggests, purely by force, and have no more right to maintain them than Germany has to fight to regain them. The first stage would be to prepare certain definite proposals, which could be applied not only to the old German colonies but to all colonies, and to present these to a conference of the imperial Powers. Germany and Italy should be invited and asked to participate in an international system of overseas development on condition that they would agree—which I fear is improbable—to conditions designed to safeguard the welfare and increase the independence of the native populations. The National Peace Council has organised a petition which is already signed by about 600,000 people, including some very prominent names from all parties, in favour of such a conference. We should do this, to quote Lord Beaverbrook, "because it is right." It would make some sense of our democratic professions; it should also unite the democratic Powers and at the same time offer Germany and Italy restitution on honourable terms.

* * *

Lord Allen of Hurtwood, who died in an Alpine nursing home, was a remarkable man, whose qualities in another age and another country would have made him a great ecclesiastical statesman. He had a subtle mind, always ingeniously concerned with the complex application of apparently simple moral principles. The latter part of his career has made people forget his earlier achievements. In 1916 his fanatical courage, no less than his gift of organisation, turned the C.O.s' protest against war into a serious political movement. The same qualities enabled him during his term of office to double the membership, the financial resources and the political influence of the I.L.P., which, the present generation is apt to forget, dominated the Labour Party during its earlier period. A physically frail and highly sensitive man, Allen lost one lung during his imprisonment as a C.O. and all his subsequent career would have been different—and perhaps the history of the British Labour Party would have been different—if he had not been kept from active politics after the war by ill health. Not that he could ever keep away from politics, nor for long together think of anything else. He became a power behind the scenes. When he did come out to battle, he had a gift of hardness that made him a formidable opponent. I have watched him exposing shady tactics and dishonest practices with a combination of moral fury and detective skill. His skilful dialectics and often Machiavellian argument, combined with a fervent moral appeal, sometimes exasperated those who did not mind direct opposition. He could back a friend with unwavering loyalty through times of difficulty, and his critical decision in 1931 was due, I know, to a personal appeal from MacDonald. I well remember a conversation with him at that time. He had a flattering letter asking for advice and help from MacDonald, who had treated him with little respect in the preceding years. I left Allen, wondering how far his decision was due to personal loyalty and how far he saw in MacDonald's letter an opportunity of power. He expressed both sentiments to me; I think he had also a doubt, which proved only too well founded, about the possibilities of retaining any influence over MacDonald once he was head of the Tory Government. I think he would have admitted at the end of his life that he had been exploited and discarded after the election of 1931. He was then left in the pathetic position of having quarrelled with his real friends and having to make terribly unconvincing efforts to show that his political philosophy was consistent and unchanged. He was the only idealistic Socialist of my acquaintance with a genuine talent for finance. He used it for the benefit of the I.L.P. He was always fascinated by the play of the money market and he had an absorbing interest in the theory of money. He also had an enlightened love for the arts. But the core of the man was always his ethical outlook. Draped, so to speak, in a Genevan gown, he turned every platform, even the correspondence columns of the *Times*, into a pulpit. His sermons were always powerful and often aggravating. Listening to his later condemnation of Marxism, I used to recall the brief period when Allen himself professed this creed. In the last conversation I had with him nearly a year ago, he announced his determination to start and himself lead an anti-conscription campaign if the National Government introduced compulsion. As subtle as he was stubborn and as concentrated in action as he was versatile in thought, Allen would have been one of the most potent influences in recent British politics had he not lost a lung on the battlefield of peace.

* * *

I have investigated a queer story, of which various versions appeared in last week's daily press, and the facts seem to be as follows. Last Thursday two men in mackintoshes and with a suitcase appeared outside the offices of the British Shipowners Trading with Spain Committee. The office was locked, and they rang the bell of the caretaker's flat and asked leave to investigate the office "like the police do." The caretaker refused, and, having routed about in the cupboard outside, they left. On Saturday evening the telephone rang, and the caretaker, on answering it, heard a man's voice say: "Clear out; we are going to fire the building." The caretaker tried to ring the police, but found all the telephones in the house out of order, so he hurried out and fetched a constable. Thereupon the police entered the offices of the Committee and made a thorough search for bombs everywhere, including among the secretary's private papers. They found nothing, but on Monday they interrogated the secretary, who had returned from a week-end in the country, and were particularly anxious to know "if he had anything to do with the International Brigade, as it was linked up with the I.R.A.!" This is a true mystery story.

* * *

If the Labour Party had shown towards the Government the same ruthless determination that they display in dealing with Sir Stafford Cripps, I doubt if Mr. Chamberlain would still be in office. The power of the political machine has proved enormous. Mr. Aneurin Bevan, Mr. Strauss, Mr. Will Lawther and Mr. Charles Poole (the Lichfield victor) seem likely to follow Sir Stafford into the wilderness. But unwillingness to create a split in their own constituencies, the destruction of their political careers if they are disaffiliated, and in some cases threats of withdrawal of grants from Trade Union organisations—such pressure is coercing most of those who originally signed Sir Stafford's memorandum. Oxford City, which led the movement for non-party candidates, has surrendered to an ultimatum threatening immediate disaffiliation unless its officers pledge themselves to enter into no conversations with Liberals in the surrounding constituencies. In some wards intimidation has been applied to rank and file workers whose whole idealism has been devoted to Labour Party work and who are now threatened with expulsion by the

constituency parties at the behest of Transport House. An odd comment on this situation is provided by the announcement of the first books to be published by the Labour Book Service. Many of the titles and authors are first class. They include, however, Sir Norman Angell, who is an old Popular Fronter, G. D. H. Cole, who has been one of the most uncompromising of all of Sir Stafford's supporters, and R. H. S. Crossman, who signed the original letter of protest against Sir Stafford's expulsion. CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of the column goes this week to Stuart Piggott.

All cuttings should be addressed to "This England," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1.

Greatest demand is for the landscapes of Van Gogh, whose fame as a Bohemian has earned him popularity in Nuneaton.—*Daily Mirror.*

Dear Miss Dix,—My fiancé and I found your article, "If Hitler Married Mae West," very instructive and helpful. We feared that we might not be able to get on in married life. After reading what you wrote, we feel we have a better chance of happiness when we marry at Easter.—Letter in *Daily Mirror.*

Lipstick the colour of red wood has been designed to harmonise with the spring colours, anchovy pink, scrambled yellow, and cress green—colours duly "christened" by the Fashion Group of Great Britain. Each colour conjures up a vision or a memory of a sandwich.—*Sunday Dispatch.*

"It's a miracle—an act of God," says Councillor Thomas Daly, seventy-eight-year-old purity campaigner of Cobham (Surrey), who has become the father of the baby boy with whom you see him and his wife in this picture. "We prayed for a baby and here it is," he added. "We shall pray again—I want another."—*Daily Mirror.*

Sir George Davies (C., Yeovil) said that he approved, from his own experience in the battlefield in the last war, of shelters and a policy of the dispersal of the civil population, but deep bombproof shelters as a policy savoured too much of the funk hole.—*Daily Telegraph.*

Would genuine bird-lover in "safe" locality within 50 miles London give roomy home to pet jackdaw in event of war?—Advert. in *Daily Telegraph.*

Secret chemical formula for a new glandular-vitamin, which the Government hope may make Britain's population panic-proof in time of war, is locked in a safe at the Ministry of Health.—*Daily Sketch.*

Lady Maureen, who has been sent by the British Council to propagate British ideas and policy, began her propaganda by arriving in a pale blue and black woollen suit.

She changed into pale pink and black for a tour of the villages round Zagreb.—*Daily Express.*

Our Prime Minister carries a pocket Shakespeare with him whenever he travels. He put Shakespeare on the map with a quotation from Henry IV. when he set out for the Munich conference.—Sheffield *Star.*

THE HONEST MAN

NEWSPAPERS have often been blamed for giving more space to the sins of human beings than to their good deeds and for telling us the worst news instead of the kind of news that would cheer us all up. This week no such charge could be laid against them, for they have been devoting column after column to the story of the discovery of an honest man. Needless to say, he was an Irishman. Michael Mannion, a homeless man, sixty-one years old, left Watford Casual Ward on Saturday morning and arrived in the evening at Amersham where he intended to spend the night in the workhouse. On the way there he saw two pound-notes lying on the pavement, and, though he was penniless and had eaten no food since his bread-and-margarine breakfast at Watford, instead of accepting the money as a gift from Heaven, he took it to the police-station where it was ultimately claimed by a poor woman with a family of eight children. "I was brought up not to keep anything that didn't belong to me," he said to the *News Chronicle* correspondent; and again: "I thought whoever lost it would be wanting it." And he would not even take the five-shillings reward the poor woman offered him, declaring that one-and-sixpence was enough. Diogenes would not have needed a lantern to discover an honest man in Amersham.

I wonder how foreigners of the prying sort will interpret the publicity given to Michael's story. Will they ask: "Are honest men so rare in England that the discovery of an honest man causes almost as much excitement as the discovery of the North Pole did?" That, I think, is the line I should take if I were a foreigner engaged in anti-democratic propaganda. I should cite Michael's uniqueness as evidence of the dishonesty of the democracies, and point out that in totalitarian countries men like Michael were so common as not to be worth mentioning in the newspapers. Not being a propagandist, however, I think the prominence given to Michael by the newspapers was justified. A widow once became famous by contributing a mite to charity: her mite, indeed, is the most famous charitable donation that has ever been recorded. Michael's honesty was on the same relatively gigantic scale as the widow's charity. Because of it, he is now a figure in a fable.

Some people may think that honesty is an easy virtue: if so, they have lived all their lives well beyond the scope of temptation. I doubt whether it is even a natural virtue. There have been peoples whose moral code made light of it and who condoned or even applauded theft. "Among some of the Eskimos," according to L. T. Hobhouse, "theft, when discovered, is merely held a clever trick; among the Balantes in Africa it is held honourable, while among the Kaffirs the children of chiefs may steal within their own tribe." The Red Indian's code forbade him to rob a guest who was under his roof, but permitted him to rob him when on the prairie. The Moors, again, "do not punish theft by night, but only by day, and then only when the thief is caught in the act." These various attitudes to theft suggest that it is just as natural to be a thief as to be an honest man. Those who maintain that all property is theft would say, perhaps, that it is more natural. I sometimes wonder whether anybody is naturally honest. There are children, no doubt, who are impeccably honest from an early age, but is this honesty due to their nature or their upbringing? It seems to me to be more natural for a child, given a reasonable amount of temptation, to rob a larder or an orchard than not to rob it.

The proof that dishonesty is natural lies in the fact that even in civilised countries it has to be restrained by the threat of all manner of punishments in this world and the next, and that, in spite of everything that is done to suppress it, dishonesty still flourishes in all ranks of society. The committee of the Stock Exchange has again and again tried to make rules to prevent the dishonest rich man from practising his skill on the widow and orphan; yet in our own time many eminent financiers have preferred risking ruin to earning a living by unnaturally honest ways! Every now and then, too, we hear of some unfortunate postman who, after many years of service, steals a few postal orders and, as a result, loses both his job and the prospect of a pension. You would imagine that a man in such a job had so many reasons for being honest that dishonesty would have no attractions for him. But there will always be a number of human beings deficient in that useful emotion, the fear of being found out. Hence the dishonest solicitor who gambles with trust funds. Hence, too, the dishonest policeman who creates an occasional scandal in the force.

Is there any trade or calling or profession, indeed, in which dishonesty has not at some time or other been rife? Dishonest judges seem once to have been fairly common, and even within living memory there were judges who were widely believed to be dishonest—corrupted, not by bribes, but by political partisanship. If Dr. Cronin's novel, *The Citadel*, is to be taken as an approximately true account of life in the medical profession, it ought not to be difficult to find a dishonest man in Harley Street. Even the English gentleman does not always appear in history as the impersonation of honesty he is commonly supposed to be. There are peers who would not be sitting in Parliament to-day if their ancestors had been as honest as Michael Mannion.

Such are the charms of dishonesty that you will find even men who are usually honest in money matters and who will yet turn to dishonesty for fun. The number of spoons, forks and ashtrays stolen from hotels and restaurants every year as trophies is so enormous that, reading it, you might conclude that the human race is no better than a gang of thieves. There are thousands of people who see a moral difference between "pinching" and stealing, and who, though they would not steal your purse, would pinch your ashtray. I once knew a man who, if he were visiting a house and were left alone for a minute or two, always filled his pockets from his host's cigarette-box. I have heard him boasting of this as a feat, and it was clear that he thought that, in doing what he did, he was living in wise obedience to the maxim, "God helps those who help themselves." One of the best men I ever knew used, as a boy, to climb into a railway-station refreshment-room when it was closed and to steal cakes and buns with a gang of other boys. He grew up to be a perfectly honest man, but can we be certain that the honesty of his manhood was as natural as the dishonesty of his boyhood?

What, again, are we to say of the kleptomaniacs? The ordinary kleptomaniac, it seems to be generally agreed, steals, not from necessity, but from a natural desire for self-expression. The lawyers speak of "an uncontrollable impulse," and what could be more natural than an uncontrollable impulse? An impulse of this kind, I suppose, must be the explanation why so many otherwise virtuous people steal valuable editions of books. There are other equally virtuous people who yield to an uncontrollable impulse to steal plates out of art-books. Honesty may be, as the proverb says, the best policy, but the kleptomaniac is not to be seduced by cold utilitarianism.

It is interesting to speculate on the possibility that a new morality will some day appear in obedience to which we shall look on theft, not as a crime, but as a virtue. There is such a thing as moral evolution—it is going on round us every day—and there seems to be no reason why we should not in the course of it ultimately get back to the point-of-view of the Balantes of Africa who held theft to be honourable. The chief reason for thinking that theft will probably continue to be regarded as a crime is that other people's dishonesty is so inconvenient. In our complicated social system it is almost indispensable that other people should be trustworthy. We cannot bet comfortably unless we know our bookmaker to be an honest man. We cannot go to law with any confidence if we suspect our lawyer of readiness to sell us to the other side. Who, if he were ill, would go to a specialist notorious for diagnosing appendicitis when there was no appendicitis merely in order to get a hundred guineas for an operation? We may not be particularly honest ourselves, but other people's honesty is clearly essential to the greatest happiness of the greatest number.

Hence, let us praise an honest man when we find him in a world in which the presence of hundreds of thousands of policemen and detectives and judges and magistrates and lawyers and chartered accountants suggests that, whereas an honest man is the noblest work of God, the ordinary man has to be carefully watched.

In such a world let us take off our hats to Michael Mannion.

Y. Y.

Miscellany

GLORIA MUNDI

WHO needs words in autumn woods
When colour concludes decay?
There old stories are told in glories
For winds to scatter away.

Wisdom narrows where downland barrows
Image the world's endeavour.
There time's tales are as light that fails
On faces which fade forever.

SIEGFRIED SASSOON

THE CLERK'S TALE

THERE were two railway stations in the town where I lived when I was a boy, the Junction and the East station, and from both of them the suburban trains went up to London. It was during the War, when I was sixteen, that I last used that line. I used to go from the East station and the trains were very crowded. We all sat or stood, jammed against each other, and people rarely talked.

There was, nevertheless, one talker, if what he said can be called talk. He started with us at the East station. The moment he got into the compartment he would begin. "Must we have that window open?" he would say. Or, "Will you kindly move up and give me more room. Five passengers are allowed each side." Or, "Kindly sit on the opposite side, your smoke is annoying me." Or, if a woman opened the door, he would say, "This is a smoking compartment. Can't you go to the special compartments for ladies?" He hated women. All these things he planked down like a man throwing aside a spade in a temper. And after he said them he took off his glasses, showed his large, cold, snail-grey naked eyes, jerked back his shoulders and spread his fingers, as if preparing to slap someone hard on the face. He was a hard-chinned, grey-haired man of fifty. People turned away to the window, raised their papers, looked more closely at their books and said nothing.

One day somebody said to me, "You should be sorry for that man, not mock him. One of his sons has been killed in the war. And the other has been wounded." I was silent. This conveyed little to me. I was sixteen. The world, the war—I hardly saw or heard of them. The mark of the war on that train meant nothing. I lived in a different world. I lived in a dream. Looking out of the carriage window, sunk in some book, watching the slow clock in the warehouse where I worked, I lived for only one thing in those days; that time should be urged on and the week pass.

So that it would be Sunday once more. For on Sunday during one hour on Sunday morning, I saw Isabel Hertz. She was in my class at Sunday School, a girl who was half-Swedish, with hair as yellow as thick sunflowers and candid eyes like blue pebbles of ice. Her throat, her lips which broke apart in piety when she sang the hymns, and her silk legs, intoxicated me. Once I fell down the Sunday School stairs when I heard her voice in the doorway below. When she spoke I thought of a crystal of snow falling on a warm hand and instantly melting; an inestimable particle of herself melted away with every word and passed with a sigh to Heaven. There, ardent but purified by her purity, I joined her in melodious, fleshless and speechless union. In one of those northern landscapes of snow, perhaps, where time is frozen in the sky, where sleigh-bells ring and there is the dry mutter of skates saying, "Inevitable, for ever. Inevitable, for ever," like our love, over iron lakes of ice.

It was a very small incident which had started my love for Isabel Hertz. It occurred one Sunday at the school. With

her Bible on her lap she was sitting opposite to me for I was afraid to sit next to her.

" Isabel, dear," the teacher said, " what is God ? " Isabel, who always held her head a little to one side as if her small ears were listening to the spring sky, turned her head. She hesitated as if waiting for the voice of Heaven ; then she replied, " God is love."

I was looking at her, waiting for her to speak, and she caught my eye and smiled. A pain like hunger pinched my throat.

All that day, I could eat nothing, but my mouth seemed to drink and eat the air because she, miles away, was breathing it. There was a laburnum tree in our garden and I cut her initials, I. H., on the trunk and went to have a look at them every hour. I even went out after dark before I went to bed and struck a match to see them. I told my parents I had dropped a pencil there and was looking for it. I was awake all night and horses seemed to be galloping over my heart.

I longed to dream at night about Isabel Hertz but this never happened. I was dreaming about her all day ; but when the next Sunday and the next came I felt my body was covered with the garish tattoo of guilt and I could not speak. I never spoke to her. Once when she spoke to me, I choked.

Man cannot live by the spirit alone. It was about this time that, thinking always of the face and walk of Isabel Hertz, I started imagining things I could do with girls with round shoulders and protruding upper teeth. The uglier the better. I used to follow them. There was a girl who got into the train at the next station one morning. She carried a small cardboard attaché case which had the initials D. O. M. on it. At the London station, some nights after, I saw her again. The fact that I had now seen her twice, by accident, overruled everything. I dropped all other girls with protruding teeth and followed D.O. M. *Her* teeth stuck out like tusks.

D. O. M. was a dark, shabby, stumpy girl with thin legs and high, scared shoulders. Her vacant, sparrow-brown eyes and those teeth which spread her lips and left her mouth open, gave her a continual gape of craving and hunger. She was always with a tall friend and as they walked up the platform they bumped their hips against each other or pushed and pinched. They were always laughing and made people stare.

I used to follow in the evenings. My technique was like this. I got out at her station and gave her about 50 yards start and then I went after her. She and her friend went first down the Station road ; then they turned to the left and went up a long street of small villas. At the two corners I used to put on speed when she and her friend were out of sight ; but when, racing round the corner, I found I was only ten yards behind them, I eased off and let them go ahead. At last they would turn into a side street where, I supposed, she lived. There I left her and went on home. The idea of knowing exactly where D. O. M. lived was repugnant.

At first there was excitement in this pursuit ; then dead but obliged boredom and finally the humiliation of secrecy. For the more I saw of D. O. M. the more I disliked her. I shuddered at the worn fur collar of her coat, her bad complexion, her giggle, the silly way in which she was always bumping into her friend, her bad, scraping walk which turned over the heel of her left shoe. All these things gave me a horror which I could not resist for I felt in my own mouth the hunger I saw in hers. But once she had gone, there were freedom, weariness and relief. I went home exhausted. Once more I could dream freely about Isabel Hertz.

This went on into the summer. It was a bondage. D. O. M. did not know I followed her. But one evening towards the end of September, something did happen which changed the situation and altered my life. Just as we were all at the end of the long straight road of villas and D. O. M. was about to turn into her street and set me free, she gave a sudden twist to her shoulders, as a pomeranian does when it starts prancing and yapping, opened her mouth wide and put her tongue out at me three or four times. After this she put her hand to her throat and pretended to be sick. She knew. She had known all the time. I felt deep shame and anger. But this soon gave place to a decisive bombast and brutality. The next time I saw her I was determined to speak.

The following evening I walked past the barrier on to the platform of the London station and searched for D. O. M. She was at her usual place near the indicator. I was late in getting there and I had not reached it when the train came in. I saw her get into a compartment and I was going to join her but, at the last moment, I was afraid. I pretended to myself, I would be more subtle. I would get into the next compartment. I opened the door and got in and, as I did so, I heard a voice shout : " Full up here." I saw the violent man. He was wearing a light grey pistol-coloured suit.

But the train moved. There was nothing to be done. He couldn't turn me out. I stayed at the window. The draught of the rushing train was blowing in my face. One of those yellow sunsets of the autumn with cloud like the brown smoke that runs off paraffin flares in the street markets, was painted over the manure-coloured brick of London and the approaching pink brick of the suburbs. The train snuffled on. I looked out of the window and then I saw D. O. M. at the next one, not her face but the elbow of her green coat and the fur of her collar. She was standing, too. I stared until the wind made my eyes sting. Presently her head showed. But she did not turn, the metals crossed like scissors under the train at the points outside the coming station. Someone got out there and I went to take his place. In doing so, I kicked the violent man's toe. He dropped his paper, stiffened his chin and muttered. I apologised and sat down.

At the next station another person got out and left the door open. " Close the door ! " shouted the man. I was glad to curry favour. I stood up, closed the door and looked out. I saw her head again. I stared and stared and waited. She did not look my way. I went back to my place. But I couldn't stay there. I had to get up again. She was there. She saw me. She affected not to see me. I was derisively excited. I had entirely lost all sense of the people in the compartment. They were nothing but wagging and shaking sacks. I went back, got up again, a half-dozen times. I opened and closed the window, stepped across people's legs, gazed out, sometimes rewarded and sometimes disappointed. As I went to my seat once more I hardly heard the man opposite to me say :

" What the devil do you think you're doing, you young fool. Can't you sit still ? "

" This is not your compartment," I said.

The wind in my eyes and the sight of D. O. M. at the window had given me defiance. All the brutality that lies under humiliation was ready.

" Perpetually getting up and treading on my feet," said the man.

" There is no need to lose your temper," I said. I was swept into another world away from everything I had known. I felt the recklessness of a blasphemer in defying a man thirty years older than myself, a man with grey hair. I felt I had grown up ten years with a word.

" You dare talk to me like that," said the man, removing his pince-nez and showing me his naked grey eyes.

The other passengers looked at us in a stupor of displeasure.

" If you were my son," he said, " I'd thrash you within an inch of your life."

" Try," I said. " Go on." I felt about thirty. I suddenly felt I had fought in the war. " Why aren't you in the Army, anyway," I said. It was a phrase I had often heard.

The man threw down his paper, jumped up and was about to strike me when a passenger touched his arm.

" I shall call an inspector," he said.

An expression of bliss came over the faces of the others in the compartment. There was a worship of inspectors on our line.

" Call a dozen inspectors," shouted the man, still standing and threatening me. Before I knew what I was doing I gave him a push in the waistcoat, the train suddenly stopped with

a jerk and he fell back into his seat. In our quarrel we had passed D. O. M.'s station where I always got out. We had arrived at the East station, the terminus.

This put me in a panic because I did not want to be seen quarrelling in the town where my home was. The passengers had risen and one, a woman, was between me and the man. White at the temples, he was trying to get at me. I pushed and got out on to the platform first, but my enemy was on me. He tumbled out and hit hard. The blow hit my shoulder. And he grabbed my arm, too. He was savage and unguarded. I saw his mouth like a flattened rose and landed my knuckles on it. This knocked him into the crowd and his spit was on my hand.

I knew I was for it now and had not a chance against this man and I was scared by what I had done. I got a burning blow on the ear that nearly knocked me senseless. I swung back at him and perhaps I hit him or one of the people who were trying to get between us and the barrier. It wasn't a fight.

"You young swine. You young hound," I heard his shouts. A passenger muddled the next swing of his arm and I caught him on the collar. The blow was not as wonderful to me as the first one; it made me feel dizzy. His spit on my hand had gone cold. I dodged away quickly, jumped on to a truck, climbed over the low fence and got down into the coal yard. A number of people were arguing with the man. His hat had fallen off and had been kicked and he was holding it crumpled in his hand and shouting at the person who had trodden on it. Someone said, "Striking a boy like that!" and this made me feel heroic now I was safe. I walked away with the feeling that I was treading through flames and one side of my face seemed to be like a football. Then I felt horror at myself; and at the whole human race. I had struck a man whose son had been killed. I suddenly knew what the war was. I went home and was sick.

After this, I did not use the East station any more. I got up earlier and used the Junction. For two years I dared not go near the East station and I did not see D. O. M. again. I found a new girl on the new line and went out arm-in-arm with her. That had an unhappy ending, too—unhappy for the girl. None of this would have happened if Isabel Hertz had not known what God is.

V. S. PRITCHETT

PICASSO

To say that the exhibition at Rosenberg and Helft's is surprising is to say nothing: was there ever a Picasso exhibition that was not? All one can say is, this exhibition is more surprising than usual. For here we see Picasso in joy; and because his expression is more intense than that of any other living artist inevitably his emotion appears so too. We have become so used to a tragic Picasso that this blaze of happiness is challenging almost. One remembers all those superb but disquieting variations on a single theme, the horror of femininity; one remembers, only two years ago, Guernica. It can hardly be said that since then the world in which we live has grown more cheerful; also, the majority of these pictures—the mere existence of which was unknown even to the master's friends and familiars—were painted in '37. But artists live in a world of their own, and here comes one of the great to put art in its place, that is above circumstance. In a way, the effect produced by these three roomfulls of pictures is comparable with that produced by a collection of Renoirs: they give a sense of serenity and joy.

Six weeks ago, in Paris, M. Paul Rosenberg told me that he intended to bring this collection to London as soon as the show in the rue La Boëtie was over, because he thought it important that our students should have an opportunity of seeing it at once. To be sure, it is important that students and everyone else should see this and all other exhibitions of Picasso's work; for Picasso is not only a great artist, but the greatest force in contemporary art and one of the formative influences of the age. But M. Rosenberg need have no fear that the *epigoni*, old as well as young, will be behindhand on this any more than on other occasions. By now in Paris they are making, and probably showing, Picassos type 1939.

Though Picasso is as various as Cleopatra and as swift as Atalanta, the cosmopolites of Montparnasse are ever hot on his heels. Always he is being pitilessly imitated or robbed; neither could it be otherwise. For he is the predominant influence in the plastic arts, and has been so for five-and-twenty years. Thence arise most of the artistic paradoxes and contradictions of our time. Picasso became *chef d'école*, the man to be imitated, the mine to be tapped, when he was about thirty. In this there is nothing extraordinary: Delacroix was not much older when, all unwilling, he was crowned king of the Romantics; David attained his position of authority somewhere between *Les Horaces* (1784) and 1790, that is to say when he was forty or so; at about the same age Courbet was saluted "master" by the young, having saluted himself at least ten years earlier; only Cézanne had to wait till he was almost dead before anyone thought of imitating him. The worst of it about Picasso is that he is inimitable. A Picasso is a miracle; a pastiche of a Picasso is patent nonsense. There is nothing in his work for disciples to explore and elaborate; for the content of each picture is a poise subtle beyond the dreams of funambulism, and that poise is Picasso. Analysis yields nothing, except that the picture is right: as well imitate the solution of a quadratic equation. A picture by Picasso is not only a finished work of art; it is the end of a chapter, of a blind alley.

Taking the hint thrown out by Cézanne, Picasso continued to push abstraction further and further. And, as he remained, and remains, master of the age, children of the age found themselves, willy-nilly, compelled to express in abstractions more or less—what? The content of a Picasso is unseizable. Successfully to fill, to animate, the forms he scattered lavishly, the disciple would have had to be Picasso. So the abstract forms remained unfilled, and we enjoyed, or did not much enjoy, ten years of Cubism. A reaction was overdue, a reaction towards palpable content—drama, romance, anecdote even. But Picasso and his unescapable influence remained. To be respectable, forms had to be, at least to some extent, abstract.

And so we come to Surrealism, and find most of those contemporaries who may or may not be called surrealists—that depends, or used to depend, on André Breton and Mr. Penrose—still in the throes of contradiction. Form and content are still at odds. One need go no further than the Mayor Gallery—a mere step from Bruton Street—to see in the drawings of Henry Moore abstract forms being used to make melodramas. And Henry Moore is one of the more gifted of the master's victims. His is a genuine talent for abstract form-making: but no less genuine is his taste—it is in the spirit of the age—for drama and psychology and fate-knocking-at-the-door, to say nothing of propaganda. When we study the smaller fry, the signs of contradiction become pitiable. If only they could realise that for their job, story-telling, frank photography is the appropriate medium, that their proper masters are Luke Fildes and the Hon. John Collier, how much happier they would be. But they cannot, for they are under the spell of the magician. Picasso rules our age. And it has come to this: having spent some thirty-five years reducing brute facts to significant forms, we are now using those forms, or what we take for them, to do something which could be done better by the methods of the Royal Academy and better still by a camera-man.

Meanwhile in Bruton Street Picasso reigns, supreme and gay. Consider that group of paintings which I have nicknamed the *carafe costaude* series—Nos. 5, 6, 7, 9, 11, 15, 23, 29. All, save the last, are of 1937; Nos. 6 and 7 are perhaps the best. They are characteristically beautiful and yet extraordinary—I use the word in its strictest sense. The miracle has been achieved by means peculiar to the artist, of which we guess little or nothing but which we have come to take for granted.

It is the mood, the serene confidence, the complete absence of exasperation or commiseration that takes one by surprise. The hand is the hand of the master of the Blue period and the Rose, of the *Nègre*, the *Grosses femmes*, the Dinard, Guernica; but the heart is not. I am not suggesting that one period is better than another; but I do say there was a sentiment common to all periods and discoverable in almost everything that Picasso did which is not to be found in this exhibition. Some called it tragic, others sentimental. I defy anyone to find a trace of tragedy or sentimentality here. CLIVE BELL

THE MOVIES

"Trois Valses," at the Curzon
"Les Gens du Voyage," at the Academy
"Sweethearts," lately at the Empire
"King of the Turf," at the London Pavilion

Trois Valses is one of those concoctions which the French know so well how to dish up: a *Bitter Sweet* without the lush sentiment and with the great advantage of music by Johann Strauss and Oscar Straus. The story is of the simplest. First waltz, 1867; Fanny Grandpré, prima ballerina, loves the Marquis de Chalencey, of the Guards, and is persuaded to give him up for the sake of his career. Second waltz, 1900; Fanny's daughter, Yvette, a star of musical comedy, falls in love with Chalencey *fils*, but leaves him rather than abandon her own career. Third waltz, 1939; the grandchildren of the first couple meet in a film studio, and at last love triumphs. All the Chalenceys are played by Pierre Fresnay, and all the Grandprés by Yvonne Printemps.

The operette from which this film is derived ran for a year at the Bouffes Parisiens; I saw it there and have no hesitation in pronouncing the film better. The middle episode, it is true, loses on the screen something of its ninetyish sparkle and wit: the eye demands the red plush of the *salon privé* and the golden necks of the Veuve Clicquot. But elsewhere it is precisely by its greater appeal to the eye that the film scores. The stage decor was dowdy, provincial and, by the time I saw it, no longer clean; whereas the photography of the film is the work of a genius named Schuftan who has made out of dancing classes, race meetings and back stage disorder a series of delightful compositions; the variety of his lighting alone deserves the closest attention. The film is directed by Ludwig Berger, one of the most gifted men of the old Ufa group, now in exile; and he and Schuftan between them have created at the opening of the film one of the gayest and most exhilarating sequences outside the work of Walt Disney. Like him they make the musical rhythm the starting point of the design; the whole screen dances in time to a Strauss polka: a pair of impresarios sing *couplets* to one another in a swaying *fiacre*, then the tempo slackens while a group of ballet girls practise and chatter, only to be whipped up more furiously than ever to accompany the first appearance of the star, watching the races in the middle of a crowd of absurdly rhythmical racegoers. This is the sort of thing only the cinema can give us, and there is plenty of it in *Trois Valses* to enhance the familiar but always delicious charms of Mlle. Printemps' voice.

Les Gens du Voyage is a film of circus life made by Jacques Feyder and starring his wife, Françoise Rosay. The conventional setting provides easy drama, and the story of jealousy and young love is simple and at times tedious. But the film is saved by two things. One is the acting of Françoise Rosay in the unexpected part of a lion-tamer. I detest those turns in which lions and tigers, alternately bored and resentful, are made to perform unnatural actions for our amusement; but no one could fail to be impressed by the courage and swagger of Mlle. Rosay in the arena, for the film employs no double. Her grasp of the simple, coarse, kind nature of the lion-tamer is even more remarkable than her technical skill in the arena: she lives inside the character, and everything is right—her harsh laugh, her way of rolling a cigarette, her attitude as she bends over a pot of soup. Recalling her varied impersonations in *Carnet de Bal*, *Joueur d'Échecs* and *Kermesse Heroique*, we must salute a very brilliant actress. Besides her performance the most notable feature of *Gens du Voyage* is its excellent photography. Circuses are naturally extremely photogenic; and every possibility has here been eagerly seized and exploited, from the striped shadows of the cage bars thrown across the tigers' own stripes in the opening shot to the brilliant conclusion, a chase across the roof-top of a building in which the circus is playing down below. *Gens du Voyage* is always exciting to the eye, if seldom to the mind.

If *Sweethearts* is not just the saccharine Eddy-Macdonald-Technicolor compound one expects, it is because the book is by Dorothy Parker who has infused some of her caustic wit into the story of two good-natured, devoted and thoroughly stupid stars doomed to appear year after year in a Broadway smash hit. Cut down by half, this would make a very amusing film. *King of the Turf* is a regulation racing story containing Adolphe Menjou (always a joy), a rather attractive new boy actor called Roger Daniel, and oceans and oceans of the stickiest transatlantic sentiment imaginable. Adolphe adopts Roger, and, like Beery and Rooney in *Stablemates*, they unexpectedly acquire a horse: the horse makes good, its owners prosper, but Adolphe turns out to be Roger's father (which of course explains the strength of his feelings) and, in order to save the boy from the racing racket, not only conceals his relationship but pretends to be a thoroughly bad hat. Then there is a Parting, and my, how the tears flow; but all the same I enjoyed this film far more than *Marie Antoinette*. PETER GALWAY

PLAYS AND PICTURES

The Comédie Française, at the Savoy

The London performances given by the Comédie Française call for grateful appreciation rather than searching criticism. Evidently one would like to see *Phèdre* or *Britannicus*, *L'Avare* or *Le Misanthrope*, and modern plays by Claudel or Mauriac, Giraudoux or Cocteau. And evidently the programmes brought were rather thin. Out of four plays to have two by Musset is very odd—he was a great poet but not a great dramatist; and *L'Ecole des Maris* is one of Molière's earliest plays, more conventional than profound. Moreover the acting opportunities provided by these three plays are of the slightest. Mlle. Madeleine Renaud was enchanting in *Le Chandelier*, and we hope she will return to London in more rewarding roles. M. Marty's setting for this piece was delicious (he is a well-known book-illustrator) and the whole production reflected most engagingly the charm of the Romantic Period. Regnard's *Légataire Universel* was an exciting surprise. According to Voltaire, the man who does not like Regnard is unworthy to admire Molière, and although the style of *Le Légataire* lacks Molière's distinction, in this gay knockabout farce there is one character, Géronte, which a good actor can make very impressive. M. Ledoux, in this part, showed himself to be certainly a good actor, perhaps a great one. He played with an extravagance that in less gifted hands would have been intolerable, his coughs were as piercing as sirens, his legs revolved beneath him, suspicion, avarice, fear, love of power, and sly lasciviousness exuded from his rheumy eyes and flabby cheeks—a more ferocious caricature of old age could not be imagined. How one would like to see him as Tartuffe or Harpagon! Mlle. Béatrice Bretty in the maid's part was as rich, rewarding and savoury as a *cassoulet*, and M. Pierre Dux's Crispin was various and effervescent. It had been a pleasure to hear Molière's verse, Musset's verse and prose, spoken with such sureness and speed, but the Regnard was triumphantly theatrical. May we hope that next year the Comédie Française will return, will occupy His Majesty's or Drury Lane, and will show what can be done with the masterpieces, ancient and modern, of French drama? We wish also that the Anglo-French Art and Travel Society, encouraged by the success of their visit, could induce other Paris companies to come to London. Jouvet's production of the *Ecole des Femmes*, for instance, would astonish and delight.

"The Mother," at the Garrick

Capek's last play is vigorous, but it is not inspired. To be a great play it would need greater repose: as it is, its action is unremitting, and it drills for too long on the same spot. The really

quite unbearably painful subject is pursued without turning up any one important thought. This play relies on its exits and entrances (or apparitions and vanishings), its pauses, hushes and tensions more than on its dialogue. Capek seems to have set the theatre one last poser—"Get away with this if you can." And at the Garrick they do: they could not afford not to, for if this play sagged for a moment, it could be ridiculous. The big effect—the Dead's entrance, recruited each time by another newly-dead boy—is repeated dangerously often. Yes, *The Mother* wobbles, the whole time, just along the edge of being ridiculous. It is saved, it is kept at the purely tragic level, by superb acting. Miss Louise Hampton plays the Mother with faultless control and power: she has a flexible hardness more moving than sobs or quivers; at the same time, by implication, by echoes, almost, she makes depths of agony felt. Her smiles, her inflections, her checked and even gestures all show the woman driven by pain into a continuous irony. Her role could not be more exacting. Is this an actress of genius? Mr. Raymond Lovell's the Father—that stout, touching, homesick military *revenant*—maintains an impassive balance against the Mother well. Pathos is, strictly, more upsetting than tragedy. Mr. Lovell must have the best sad-stolid voice in London. Mr. Anthony Hawtrey's Andrew, also dead from the start, is a slighter, but plain and good, piece of work. The crashed airman son still looks stiff from the shock of death. The three adolescents get away with that most embarrassing thing, stage ragging: Peter and Christopher later make a pair of self-conscious ghosts. Mr. Henry Hepworth as Tony, the doomed tow-headed youngest, is likely and touching—he has not room to be more. This may be the play *of* the moment, but is it the play *for* the moment? It is a high class play that is, at the same time, imperfectly straight or thorough. It sent everyone home uplifted but very addled, and in a decidedly masochistic state.

"Der Rosenkavalier," at Sadler's Wells

The Sadler's Wells Company have had the temerity to stage a work which places a strain on the resources of the best equipped opera-houses in Europe; one went for the first night prepared to make allowances, and stayed to applaud, in so far as the music was concerned, almost unreservedly. Miss Joan Cross as the Marschallin sang superbly, and acted with the greatest dignity and feeling. Except by Lotte Lehmann we have never heard the part better given. The Octavian, Miss Joy McArden, has a fine tone and powerful voice, but her articulation is faulty—one could only guess what language she was singing. Moreover her physique is not particularly adapted to this role: an appearance such as we have learnt to accept in Isolde and Brunnhilde is hardly tolerable in Octavian. Miss Ruth Naylor was rather jaunty as Sophie, and has a regrettable habit of rushing from *piano* to *fortissimo* without taking the intermediate stages in a *crescendo*. But her voice is good, steady and clear. Mr. Ronald Stear sang Ochs remarkably well, and acted acceptably. Mr. Webster Booth revealed an uncommonly rich tenor in the one beautiful song allowed him, and we are impatient to hear him in a larger part. The orchestra, under Mr. Laurence Collingwood, frequently made us forget, by the excellence of its playing, that Strauss wrote for a much larger body. Something of the lusciousness was lost, but the singers were not obliged to strain their voices. Mr. Clive Carey managed the elaborate movements of a huge cast very successfully. Indeed in an outstanding performance there was only one serious flaw, the decor. Both the Marschallin and Fanninal were apparently credited with a taste for lincrusta walls, the colours of the costumes were repugnant, and the furniture was downright funny. The general effect suggested not 18th century Vienna but a chorus-girl's flat in Maida Vale during the Boer War. Opera is intended to delight the eye as well as the ear. Why, at Sadler's Wells, where the ballet decors usually charm, should the opera decors usually disgust? *Der Rosenkavalier* can be recommended as an astonishingly successful production.

Keith Baynes, at Agnew's

This is a satisfactory exhibition. Keith Baynes, long known as one of the better living English painters, here proves himself capable of doing better still. This is not only the most important but much the best collection he has shown. Also—and this makes the exhibition particularly interesting—one can see to some extent how he has achieved improvement. Liberation appears to have come through *gouache*. Consider the three big paintings in that medium 35, 37, 39, or the smaller series hanging immediately beneath them, and you will be delighted by a boldness, manifest in colour and handling, which a few years ago would have been unthinkable in the work of this artist. The venture having turned out well, evidently the artist attacked the problems of oil-painting with a confidence he had never felt before. The result is such a series as 26, 29, 31, 34. Keith Baynes was always painterlike; his new qualities, or rather the qualities newly apparent in his work, are bolder conception and confidence that he can realise what he has conceived. Always an attractive colourist, he seemed when it came to drawing, for all that his design might be conscientiously gingered up with black outlines, to lack grip. That is why *The little Chinese* (No. 30) is the most encouraging, besides being probably the best, picture in the show; the painter has pulled off handsomely a difficult and interesting piece of drawing. A good exhibition by a very serious artist.

THE COMING WEEK

FRIDAY, March 10th—
- Allen Hutt: "Some Aspects of Journalism," Group Theatre Rooms, 8.15.

SUNDAY, March 12th—
- Prof. T. H. Pear: "The Social Psychology of Everyday Life," Conway Hall, 11.
- London Philharmonic Orchestra Concert, Covent Garden, 3.15.
- Petition Rally, Speaker: Sir Stafford Cripps, Empress Hall, 7.

MONDAY, March 13th—
- J. M. Blackburn: "Propaganda and Its Effects," 8 Portman Street, 7.
- Sex Education Society Meeting: Symposium on Sex and Crime, Conway Hall, 8.
- Paul Eisler: "Fallen Bastions," 67 Eton Avenue, 8.

TUESDAY, March 14—
- N. R. Amaa Ollennu: "The Question of Colour Bar," Friends House, 1.20.
- Prof. Tenney Frank: "Problems of Roman Economic History," L.S.E., 5.
- Dr. Edgar Wind: "The Renaissance Encyclopaedia in Raphael's Frescoes," Warburg Institute, 5.30. And on March 21st and 28th
- Prof. J. B. S. Haldane: "Heredity, Chemistry and Politics," Conway Hall, 8.
- A Review of Contemporary Theatre, Group Theatre, 8.45.

WEDNESDAY, March 15th—
- Informative Meeting on the Rome-Berlin Axis. Speakers: H. N. Brailsford and R. H. S. Crossman, Livingstone Hall, 8.
- C. E. M. Joad: "The Good Life and the Liberal Tradition," Conway Hall, 8.
- Concert in aid of Basque Children's Fund, Royal College of Music, 8.15. Admission free, collection.

Correspondence

SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS'S POLICY

SIR,—There have been a number of letters in your paper dealing with my memorandum and the contents of the Petition which would lead one to suppose that the writers have neither read nor studied either of the documents. Such a letter is that of Professor Catlin in your issue of February 25th.

So far as the policy in the 12 points of my memorandum are concerned, the National Executive of the Labour Party have never suggested that there is any difference between their short term programme and the memorandum upon foreign policy, or indeed upon any item, except that in the memorandum. I speak of National Control of the basic industries, whereas the short term programme speaks of Nationalisation. As in the latter term the Labour Party includes such measures of national control as the B.B.C., the Central Electricity Board and the L.P.T.B., this is a distinction of words rather than a difference of substance. It is important, too, to observe that the Co-operators, through Mr. R. A. Palmer, have expressly disclaimed their belief in any form of State Socialism, and yet are partners in the present campaign with the Labour Party.

I am quite content to rest my foreign policy on that expressly declared by the Labour Party and by myself in the memorandum.

The basis of that memorandum and of the Petition is that the various Parties in opposition should maintain their independence, individuality and particular programmes, but should for the term of a single Parliament agree to concerted action upon a previously agreed programme for which the 12 points of the memorandum could form a basis.

The search for this political tactic is because, in the face of the

grave Fascist dangers which confront the people of this country, it is not right to risk another five years of the pro-Fascist National Government if there is available any means of obviating such a risk.

I assert, and I do not believe any one can seriously deny the proposition, that alone and with a policy of " pure Socialism " the Labour Party cannot gain an absolute majority at the next election. Short of that, they must be dependent upon other parties or individuals if they take office. The one and only alternative, therefore, to the continuance in office of the National Government, is the combination of all progressive anti-Fascist forces in the country with a view to forming a People's Government to carry through for one Parliament the previously agreed programme.

This I am convinced is possible. The experience already gained in the Petition campaign points strongly not only to the need for such common action, but to the very remarkable response that the suggestion received, especially from those so-called non-political elements of the electorate that are the determining factor in every election. The Petition has been launched to test how far those of us who believe in the policy of combined action are right, and what measure of support such a tactic has amongst the electors. It is, after all, the electors who will suffer if the wrong tactic is pursued, and it is not therefore inappropriate to give them an opportunity of expressing their wishes before those tragic words " too late " are spoken.

If the National Executive of the Labour Party are right in their estimate of public opinion, then there is nothing to fear as the result of the Petition. They will be proved right and we shall be proved to be wrong.

I cannot, therefore, appreciate the reason for the personal bitterness and vindictiveness with which they are attempting to cloud the political issue, except upon the basis that they are bankrupt of any sound arguments which would appeal to reason, and so they try to raise passion by calumnies and slanders. This does not seem to me to be a helpful line to pursue in the present critical political circumstances.

To make the text of the Petition effective and to influence the leadership of the political parties means a great deal of hard work and also a considerable amount of finance. We have not the support of large Trade Union funds. We believe that those who favour this line of action should have the opportunity of providing both the service and the money. I would ask any of your readers who are interested in the Petition Campaign, and who are prepared to help with the work of Petition Committees in their area, to write at once offering their services, to the office of the Petition Committee at Clifford's Inn, Fleet Street, London, E.C.4.

I would also make the most earnest appeal to your readers to support our campaign financially. If one tithe of those who are prepared to express their support in words or applause would send us a few pounds, or even shillings, we should have ample funds to make the campaign the success it can be made.

Nothing, I am convinced, could do more to revive our democracy, and through British democracy the whole world democratic movement, than this demonstration of the determination of the British people to get rid of the present Government and put in its place a Government of unity and progress. It is a small sacrifice we ask, and I hope it will be readily given by many of your readers. Donations may be sent to me, and will be acknowledged.

3 Elm Court, Temple, E.C.4. STAFFORD CRIPPS

TRAFALGAR SQUARE

SIR,—My wife and I were in Trafalgar Square last Sunday and feel that your remarks on the behaviour of the crowd require an answer.

Firstly, we saw no sign whatever of any previous organisation of the shouting and boo-ing : it appeared to be quite spontaneous. We met several Communists who took no part in the shouting and were criticising it.

We felt that the shouting was due to

(1) Boredom owing to the low quality of the speeches.

(2) Disagreement with the attitude of the speakers to the Spanish situation. For example, Dr. Haden Guest, devoted his speech to the conditions under which " we " should accept an armistice in Spain : he wanted " promises " (his own word) from Franco concerning reprisals, Spanish independence, etc. : this did *not* meet with favour in the crowd. I did not hear a single speaker raise the issue of supplying arms to the Republican Government.

The general shouting did not start until the meeting had lasted about an hour.

The " concentration " on Morrison seemed to be due, at least in part, to his recent meeting with Sir John Anderson and Ernest Brown. It is perhaps apposite to remark that I heard the chairman of one plinth attack Sir Stafford Cripps before the shouting commenced. " Chamberlain loves Cripps," he said. Dr. Edith Summerskill who confined herself almost entirely to a humanitarian appeal for money was heard in almost complete silence.

If Morrison had appealed for Spain once the first interruptions were over he would probably have had a much better hearing : but he started off by saying the Communists (whom he accused of organising the shouting) were acting as if they were Franco's agents. D. W. SMITH

92A, Sebert Road, Forest Gate, E.7.

[Critic writes : " There seems ample evidence that some one or other led the booing. I did not accuse any political group of doing so and indeed I am sure that all the responsible people of various parties associated with Sir Stafford deplored it. I also said that it was spontaneously taken up by many members of the crowd. My point was that it was foolish and irresponsible.

" I am informed by the management of the *Tribune* that all their sellers are instructed to confine their activities to selling the paper and that all their sellers on this occasion individually deny having taken any active part in the demonstration. In any case there is no suggestion that the *Tribune* was in any way responsible for an incident which could only do harm to Sir Stafford and the cause it supports."—ED., *N.S. & N.*]

SIR,—Most of us went to the Spain rally in Trafalgar Square to protest against a betrayal. We lost this feeling as we watched self-conscious celebrities greeting each other effusively and getting in the way of the people who were trying to erect the banners. By the time the meeting began, we were good humoured and expectant.

The first chap was something to do with the London Trades Council. He was short and was not interrupted. Then came Attlee. In a deprecating way he was mildly violent. While he was speaking the International Brigade came. The flags of fifty nations parading above the heads of that vast throng as they went round the Square. There was a murmer of appreciation from the

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crowd. Surely this was an opportunity for a speaker, but Attlee took some time to notice them. Eventually he did say something about the Brigade, but nothing memorable. Anyway he got a perfect hearing.

Then came the Hon. Member for Walthamstow, who was the most awful bore.

We began to chip in. We began to chant "We want Cripps." We were not organised. We chanted "We want Cripps," but a performing seal would have done just as well. The only thing we did not want was any more of the Hon. Member for Walthamstow.

Then came Ellen, and got a grand reception, and if Herbert Morrison had followed her he would have got a grand reception and a perfect hearing, but he did not follow her. Charlie Dukes followed her and the audience soon recovered its taste for hearing its own voice. He was ponderous, he was slow, and when he was interrupted he was rude. In fact by the time he finished the audience was amusing itself.

Then it was Herbert Morrison's turn. He was grand; he just stood there with a humorous grin on his face while the booing and counter-cheering went on, and waited till it stopped—and it did stop. He had only got to make a joke and he would have had the crowd eating out of his hand, but instead he said "Let it be known that the Communist Party have adopted Fascist methods, are the enemies of free speech, and have organised this demonstration to prevent Herbert Morrison from being heard."

Well, of course that got us going nicely again.

It was not an organised demonstration by the Communist Party or anybody else. If it had been, we would have given Attlee the bird and would not have waited for the Hon. Member for Walthamstow. We were just an audience who got so bored by dull speakers that we preferred the sounds of our own voices.

Then the motion was put and carried unanimously and it was announced that Attlee and Morrison were to take it to the Prime Minister in Downing Street, and a huge crowd chanted almost in unison "Let's march." There were the banners of all the London Labour Parties; there were the massed banners of the International Brigade; there was the huge crowd of sympathisers all wanting to march, and the platform did nothing. Then some wag sang out "March nothing—call the gentlemen a taxi." The gentlemen went in a taxi.

ONE OF THE CROWD.

THE POPULATION PROBLEM

SIR,—As regards the number of youths aged 20, from whom industry and services are recruited, Britain and France are at a serious disadvantage with the Totalitarian States. The figures show a still more serious position as we go down the age scale.

The population generally is rapidly getting proportionately older, and as a young man I look forward with apprehension to supporting by my labour this aged population.

In my opinion the true wealth, at least potentially, of a community is the number of healthy, capable and active citizens This is especially true in time of war

It is essential, therefore, that this proportion of the population should be increased; and it is clearly impossible that more adults should be created by home production for the next 21 years.

Apparently the Totalitarian States are anxious to export free a valuable commodity, namely young persons who have been fed, clothed, housed and well-educated. Their value is at least £1,000 each, and their only fault is that their parents think too liberally.

I would suggest that here is just the population we need, being offered to us free. If some British citizens hesitate on racial grounds there is nothing to prevent acceptance only in proportion to the mixture of Germanic, Latin and Jewish elements in our present population.

We are already short of healthy recruits for our armies; we are offered free, trained recruits of the best fighting stock in the world. Business men are already finding it difficult to find young office workers; we are offered sturdy youngsters from 14 to 18 years of age with a knowledge of Spanish to help us to capture the South American market. For our defence we need to develop numerous manufactures, such as the optical; Czechoslovakia offers us its young men trained in the best technique. We are short of domestic and agricultural workers; and are offered good human material trained to a lower standard of life than ever we expect in these occupations.

These immigrants can be put through a more careful selective process than was ever required of previous immigrants to this land, the Romans, Jutes, Normans and others who have given us the virile mixture that has peopled a third of the world, and which is now in danger of decay in its nursery England. These new strains will give us grateful young men and women who will work as Britons in the building of a saner world.

The opportunity to accept these expensive gifts from the Dictators is hardly likely to last long, and will be missed unless we alter our present lack of policy, which incidentally does not even require a medical examination.

It seems that we might in this way save exporting large stocks of money to support these refugees in other countries.

7 New Square, AMBROSE E. APPELBEE
Lincoln's Inn, W.C.2.

TEN SHILLINGS A WEEK?

SIR,—In this country, 1½ million people exist on 10*s.* a week Old Age Pension supplemented if necessary by Public Assistance. Another 1½ million men over 60 work rather than draw the pension. This is a pleasant prospect for old age—you either work till you drop dead or you die slowly in dire poverty—a prospect for 80 per cent. of all people over 70 in England. During their working days 75 per cent. of the employees earn less than £160 per annum, which leaves very little room for saving.

During the B.B.C. debate on the subject, Sir Arnold Wilson put the case for the Government. The speaker seemed to think that what was good enough some years ago was good enough to-day. Apparently in his mind times do not change. He also failed to see why any self-respecting man should object to public assistance; but to become a pauper, as a reward for a life of toil, is not enjoyable, even to a working man. The main theme seemed to be the miracle of providing another £65 millions to double the pension. In the face of the rearmament programme this sounded blatantly stupid.

Sir Arnold assured everyone that England's social services were the best, but he gave no proof of his assertion. He took up the Liberal speaker's reference to New Zealand and said "we have been hearing a great deal about it lately," and with some ambiguous remarks about the Dominion's finances concluded that "they have only 1½ million people and we cannot hope to copy them." No one would expect the present Government to copy the New Zealand Labour Government, but progressive Englishmen might like to know what it has done about old age pensions.

In 1898, New Zealand inaugurated the first Old Age Pension scheme in the world at £18 per annum. In 1917 the 10*s.* a week rate was abandoned and £1 per week was paid long before the arrival of the Socialists, who made a modest addition to it of 2*s.* 6*d.* a week. Since then the Old Age Pensions have been superseded by the 1938 Social Security Bill which gives all people over sixty 30*s.* a week with allowable extra income of 20*s.* a week. An old couple may have £3 to £4 between them and there is no property disqualification other than that producing income. The idea that what is done in a small country cannot be done in a larger one is a fallacy. The proportion of old people and of money paid per head is higher in New Zealand, which spends more per head on education and other social services than most countries. The mystery of the Dominion finances at which Sir Arnold hinted is no Socialist juggling, merely that a great many sources of income, railways, power stations, shipping, etc., are State owned, and from large salaries it is possible to draw £26 millions income tax revenue.

Sir Arnold set this aside as something impossible and closed with a Kipling quotation. Perhaps his government will supply copies to British households in the *Mein Kampf* tradition.

M CHILCOTT

A PLEA FOR TRAINING-CAMPS

SIR,—As a means of evacuating cities in danger of air-raids various suggestions have been put forward for the establishment of permanent camps, to be used in case of war as places of refuge and in peace for open-air schools or inexpensive holiday centres. While these are excellent suggestions both for meeting the immediate need and for promoting national health, is not this an opportunity that should not be let slip to make possible a period of national training for young people of both sexes, not as a war-measure but as part of our educational system? The establishment of permanent camps, immediately available as places of refuge, would form the basis of the plan.

Briefly stated, it is for a period of not less than six months to be spent in camp, engaged in occupations that are in themselves a training for work of national utility. To gain the fullest benefit

from such training, it should be taken at or after the age of 18. In planning it, four aims should be kept in view. (1) It must be of a kind to bring physical benefit and raise the standard of national health. (2) It must be directed to ends of permanent value to the community as well as being of utility in time of need. (3) It should widen the range of individual interests and teach something of the meaning and responsibilities of citizenship. (4) It should help to remove class-barriers and provide through experience of work and life in common, a basis for national solidarity in place of a near-sighted pursuit of class-interests.

The first condition, then—for town-dwellers particularly and those whose occupation is mainly sedentary—is life in the country engaged for the most part in work on the land, helping to supply seasonal demands for additional labour, or carrying out works of public utility outside the scope of private enterprise—large-scale drainage, for example, and reclamation of land from the sea or from bracken and other weed-pests—and available for help in sudden emergencies such as floods or heath fires. Not that work on the land is all that is needed, or the only training to be given. The more adventurous could take it in apprenticeship to some branch of service—lifeboat or fire brigade, for instance—on land or sea. Others could give part, and some the whole, of the time to training courses in some matter of universal utility, such as first aid, ambulance, nursing, domestic work, or some branch of food production.

Camp life would also provide opportunity for recreational and cultural activities. Evenings would be times for music and dramatics, which have a far-reaching educational value, and for lectures and discussions on matters of local and general interest, national and international problems, and various aspects of citizenship. Questions as to which there are differences of opinion are especially useful as a means of training judgment, in weighing evidence and arguments, instead of being at the mercy of methods of propaganda.

It should be one of the main objects of the training to give a practice-ground for democratic self-organisation and co-operative effort, and to be a means of overcoming class barriers. Six months of a comradeship in which differences of wealth or rank or education were ignored and each could take the part, in discussions and in the various common activities, determined by his ability and character, would be a practical step towards the ideal of a classless society with equal opportunities for all. And if the running of the camp is largely in the hands of its members, this, by giving responsibility and practical experience, in choice of leaders, expression of public opinion, and respect for decisions openly reached, of the meaning of self-government, could do much to strengthen the basis of democracy.

It is not possible in a letter to do more than touch upon one or two of the questions that such a proposal raises. Against the cost must be set, besides the benefit to the nation in health and in fitness for service, the increased productivity—a consideration of vital importance in time of war—brought about by work of this kind on the land. Organisation of the camps on a regional basis would encourage local interest and pride and give opportunity for helpful rivalry: and it is important that the organisation should not be too much centralised and regulated from above, but that everything should be done to encourage initiative and develop individual responsibility. And while it is ultimately desirable, both for the sake of the individual and that of the nation, that this training should be part of the education given to all, it would obviously be unwise to begin on a large scale or by making it compulsory. It would be well, indeed, to limit admission at first, with a view to training the leaders required if a start on sound lines is to be ensured. Expansion would only be a matter of time and organisation, once the plan was proved to work and the gains it brought plain for all to see.

The Old Vicarage, Cholesbury. J. H. BADLEY

"TO BE OR NOT TO BE"

SIR,—Readers of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION have always been among the most generous supporters of Spanish Relief, and we should therefore be most grateful if you would allow us, through your columns, to bring to their notice the forthcoming production of Eleanor Kalkowska's play, *To Be or Not to Be*, at the Phœnix Theatre on Sunday, March 19th, at 8 p.m. The play will be presented by the *Sunday at Eight Society* (President: Nancy Price. Vice-Presidents: Flora Robson, Ralph Richardson, Mary Clare, Louis Goodrich and James Laver). All profits will come to the National Joint Committee for Spanish Relief.

Eleanor Kalkowska, the author of the play, was a poet and dramatist whose work was much esteemed in pre-Nazi Germany. Several of her plays were performed on the Berlin stage, notably *Zeitungs-Notizen*, a powerful play on unemployment. Imprisoned by Hitler for her known Liberal and democratic views, she was released later, but died in exile at Berne in July, 1937. *To Be or Not to Be* is the first of her plays to be performed in England, and has been translated by Geoffrey Dunlop and Pamela Morris.

Full particulars of this production may be obtained, either from the National Joint Committee for Spanish Relief, or from Mr. Leonard Harding, *Sunday at Eight*, 43 Southdown Avenue, W.7.

BETTY MORGAN
(Organising Secretary)
National Joint Committee
for Spanish Relief,
4 Gt. Smith Street, S.W.1.

PARCELS FOR REFUGEE SOLDIERS

The terrible conditions of the concentration camps in which the refugee Spanish soldiers and others are now living in southern France have been admitted by French officials and graphically described in the daily press. The present death rate in these camps is estimated at between 300 and 400 a day. Further first-hand details are given in this week's NEW STATESMAN AND NATION in the London Diary and in Mr. Werth's article on *France and the Recognition*. We have ascertained from people who have just returned from Perpignan that it is possible to send direct help to these camps, and that the organisation in charge is both efficient and reliable. Those who wish to help should send an order with a cheque for the desired amount to the President, The Centro Español, rue de la Poste, Perpignan, France. The subscriber's order should be worded as follows: "Please send—5*s*, 7*s*. 6*d*., 10*s*., 15*s*., or £1 parcels (state number of parcels weekly and number of weeks) to Spanish refugees in concentration camps as from (name and address). I enclose my cheque for (amount)."

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Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

WILLIAM BLAKE'S parable in *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* is called *A Memorable Fancy*. It begins with an angel coming to him and exclaiming: "O pitiable foolish young man! O horrible! O dreadful state! consider the hot burning dungeon thou art preparing for thyself to all eternity. . . ." But the angel had picked the wrong man, for after they had contemplated the abyss together, Blake turned the tables by saying: "Now that we have seen my eternal lot, shall I show you yours?" and, to the angel's discomfiture, revealed a spectacle of chained baboons which first coupled with, and then devoured, each other. "So the angel said: 'Thy phantasy has imposed on me, and thou oughtest to be ashamed.' I answered: 'We impose on one another. . . .'" The parable is as true of creative artists as of philosophers, for the distinguishing mark of original writers and painters, the mark of imaginative greatness, is to be able to impose a personal vision. The angel was indignant with Blake because he could not help recognising himself and his companion angels in the form of the disgusting baboons, and he was forced to admit to himself: "This is the world in which I have always been living without knowing it." What Blake did to the angel, every great imaginative writer has the power to do to his readers. The ability to impose a personal vision of the world on the reader is the test, and Christopher Isherwood has this power. I have not read *All the Conspirators* and *The Memorial*, but the worlds of his other two books, *Mr. Norris Changes Trains* and *Lions and Shadows* are entirely personal. Nobody else would have made friends with Mr. Norris and studied his repellent character with what I can only describe as fond impartiality. Nobody else has ever revealed Cambridge as seen through the blinkers of two auto-intoxicated half-crazy adolescents. Yet both these worlds, absolutely new to us, impose themselves and are added to our experience almost as uncomfortably as Blake's vision which made the angel aware of practising cannibalism on the objects of his lust and of picking the flesh off his decaying tail. And like the angel, we feel the experiences rather a strain and are inclined to exclaim: "thou oughtest to be ashamed!" as we escape from the society of their uncanny author. But in his latest book, *Goodbye to Berlin* (Hogarth Press, 7*s*. 6*d*.) one has no such desire to break away. When one closes the book, it is Mr. Isherwood who escapes, leaving one feeling that one has lost an indispensable companion. This different relationship on the part of author and reader is not, I think, simply because the reader has acquired a new taste, or has become tolerant with familiarity, but because the author has developed far greater power. He no longer achieves his effects by plunging the reader into the unpleasant, but by leading him gently by the hand.

* * *

The book, written in the first person, is a series of portraits of people seen and known intimately during the years whilst the German Republic was breaking up, before the advent of the Nazis to power in 1933, during which the author was living in Berlin. A small part of the book has already been published in *New Writing*, edited by John Lehmann. Yet, though it is made up of separate portraits, they are so interlinked that they throw additional light on each other, on the character of the author and that of the Germans as a whole during the period described. I call them portraits rather than short stories, not because I believe they are faithful representations of real people, but because they are concerned more with character than with drama. Any drama which appears in the book seems to be the inevitable result of faithfully recording the characters in question, and to be purely incidental. I do not think many imaginative writers have attempted the form of the portrait study without being even more interested in the dramatic possibilities of a character. Turgenev was usually more interested in character than in drama, in contrast to his friend Maupassant, who was almost entirely occupied by the dramatic, anecdotal values. For this reason Isherwood sometimes reminds me of Turgenev. But Isherwood's most characteristic quality (as admirers of *Mr. Norris Changes Trains* are not likely to forget) is his choice of subject. For it is just those people whose existence is ignored by everybody, as a means of self-protection, who excite Isherwood's sympathy and stimulate his creative powers. There are many people who do not see various forms of unpleasantness: some of us even manage not to see accidents in the streets, or quarrels, or acts of cruelty, or horrible deformities. Most of us see these things and are shocked, though we usually love to read about monstrosities. But some kind of idealism enables most of us to take very little notice of the less blatant, but equally disturbing kinds of ugliness. And when we cannot overlook such drabness we simplify it, so that we can either excuse, pity, or condemn. But it is precisely these streaky specimens whom Isherwood studies most closely. There is a comic account of his running into a party of drunk Americans who were plunging in to see a cabaret performance from which Isherwood and a friend were walking out. Their leader accosted them:

> "Say," he asked Fritz, "what's on here?" "Men dressed as women," Fritz grinned. The little American simply could not believe it. "Men dressed as *women?* As *women* hey? Do you mean they're *queer?*" . . . "You *queer*, too, hey?" demanded the little American, turning suddenly on me. "Yes," I said, "very queer indeed." He stood before me a moment, panting, thrusting out his jaw, uncertain it seemed, whether he ought not to hit me in the face. Then he turned, uttered some wild kind of college battle-cry, and, followed by the others, rushed headlong into the building.

Mr. Isherwood's queerness is not what the Americans supposed: it is that he finds the people whom we all conspire to overlook, really fascinating, and that he can make them interesting to us.

* * *

The chief sitters in this gallery of portraits are his landlady and the other inmates of her flat, the members of a working-class family in a slum with whom Isherwood lived during a spell of poverty, the various rich people to whom he gave English lessons, and an English girl who had escaped from a rich family to the delights of a chancy existence as a cabaret singer, and who carried the pose of a gold-digger to all lengths, being driven into her most idiotic actions by a desperate sense of duty: she owed it to her sense of self-respect to go the whole hog. We have all known girls rather like Sally Bowles, though I do not think any individual of the type has been as well described before. But few English writers have had the opportunity of studying the characters of slum-dwellers in Berlin, shattered by years of disease and want, like the Nowaks. The portrait of Otto, the idle wastrel boy of the streets, at war with his tubercular mother, raises a problem which I find puzzling. Everything which one is told about Otto is absolutely *in character*, just as everything that one is told about Mr. Pickwick is in character. But what does this mean? For there is no Otto; there is no Pickwick. Yet the impression is so strong that one cannot believe it an illusion, and, of course, the converse, that of a character untrue to the laws of his being, is often found to dismay us in a book. I have not stressed the background: Berlin itself, which is built up for us by the casual references, the short descriptions of boys whistling up at the windows from the streets, of Nazis beating a man and leaving him with an eye hanging out, of the crowd surging away from police cars with machine-guns on them. Isherwood's style of writing appears simple and colloquial, for which reasons many readers are likely to overlook its most remarkable quality: its exactness. He never uses a cliché. I think the extraordinary effect of life which he achieves is due almost entirely to his power of expressing exactly his observations. Every detail seems true because each is the result of a sharp verbal focus in his mind. The writing of *Goodbye to Berlin* could not, I think, be better.

DAVID GARNETT

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In this novel Mr. Koestler elevates to the height of a great tragedy the story of the slave war, that rebellion of a group of gladiators and underdogs led by Spartacus which for two years, B.C. 73-71, turned parts of Italy into chaos. 7s. 6d.

JONATHAN CAPE

CRUCIFIXION

We Will Not Cease. By ARCHIBALD BAXTER. *Gollancz. 7s. 6d.*

Archibald Baxter was one of 33,000 men who resisted conscription in New Zealand. Most of them gave way under pressure; some of them who were members of religious bodies known to be opposed to all war were exempted or found alternative service; a few, Mr. Baxter amongst them, steadily refused on conscientious grounds to obey any military order. His story told with objectivity, modesty and without rancour, carries its own evidence of authenticity. It will shock people who think that the use of torture as a political weapon is confined to the Fascist Powers.

Mr. Baxter was arrested on his father's farm, gaoled in New Zealand, deported and detained for some time in South Africa, and then, still refusing all military orders, sent to join the New Zealand troops in France. Every effort, kindly and brutal, was made to persuade him to obey orders; it was several times intimated to him that once he yielded he would be given a cushy job at the base. But he had taken on a battle of his own and would not give in. As a result he was savagely beaten up, kept with his hands tied behind him in handcuffs for weeks together, and then subjected to a long period of field punishment No. 1. In his case "crucifixion" meant that he was tied to a pole for hours together with no proper grip for his feet on the ground, his toes much lower than his heels and his weight largely resting on his pinioned arms; the ropes were bound so tightly that circulation was stopped and his hands always black with congealed blood when he was taken down after periods ranging from one to four hours. In an interesting passage he describes his first experience of this torture.

> A few minutes after the sergeant had left me, I began to think of the length of my sentence and it rose up before me like a mountain. The pain grew steadily worse until by the end of half-an-hour it seemed absolutely unendurable. Between my set teeth I said: "Oh God, this is too much. I can't bear it." But I could not allow myself the relief of groaning as I did not want to give the guards the satisfaction of hearing me. The mental effect was almost as frightful as the physical. I felt I was going mad. That I should be stuck up on a pole suffering this frightful torture, a human scarecrow for men to stare at and wonder at, seemed part of some impossible nightmare that could not continue. At the very worst strength came to me and I knew I would not surrender. The battle was won, and though the suffering increased rather than decreased as the days wore on, I never had to fight it again.

This punishment was only abandoned before the twenty-eight days' sentence was completed because one night he and a fellow objector were bound up to the pole in a snowstorm and were brought close to death with cold and pain. After that he was constantly threatened with execution and once taken out to be shot. Eventually he was sent up to the firing line, where he lived the strangest life as a non-combatant without rations among soldiers under shell fire. He was on excellent terms with them. His description of the battle-field, seen from this unusual angle, is a unique addition to war literature. Deliberate efforts were made to get him killed by exposing him outside the trenches under heavy bombardment. As it happened he survived to share in a retreat during which he received no food at all and finally collapsed from exhaustion. It was after this that his treatment was most cruel. He was persistently kept with mental or insane cases—he gives a terrible description of Bradmore hospital—and finally shipped back to New Zealand, where the government resorted to the meanest of tricks to misrepresent his stand and persuade the New Zealand population that he had, in fact, served in the army and that the stories that he had been subjected to a long period of field punishment were untrue. Mr. Baxter does not claim to have won a complete victory, for it is clear that the mental and physical exhaustion following his treatment in France had worn down his spirit, and that the threats constantly held over him by the military authorities that he would be classified as mentally diseased, had some effect in keeping him quiet during the latter period of the war.

Mr. Baxter's endurance was all the more remarkable because he was not, in the conventional sense of the term, a religious man. He was not buoyed up by hopes of heaven; his martyrdom was a private and lonely affair. He was supported by no appeal to public opinion, and his opportunities of stating his faith were strictly limited. Everywhere he found sympathy among the common soldiers—this, I know from the experience of other conscientious objectors to be certainly true—and in several cases officers and sergeants who were ordered to beat him until he submitted, finally gave in, shamefacedly assuring him that they were acting from no personal ill-will. Whenever the opportunity was given him he explained that he refused military orders because he regarded all war as an immoral outrage against humanity against which he must protest as long as he had breath, and that he could under no circumstances accept the position of a soldier who was pledged to take orders even though they were merely repugnant to his nature. "The only lasting victory that we can win over our enemies," he says, "is to make them our friends." The only triumph is to bring your enemy to an understanding of your point of view, and clearly Mr. Baxter secured many such triumphs. When he had explained his point of view officers would often agree with his condemnation of war, but ask what he thought was the use of a few individuals protesting. He would explain that his protest had already been some use since the very officer who had ordered him to be beaten up the day before was now listening to him and was ready to respect and understand the stand he was making. That was Mr. Baxter's victory—to earn the respect, understanding and sometimes the agreement of officers, N.C.O.s and men, who had begun by assuming that he was a skunk and who ended by expressing their admiration for his courage and their shame at his treatment. Looking back on the war, its results and its aftermath, I am not sure that anyone can claim a more enduring victory for any idea that they thought worth dying for.

I should like to know what has happened to Mr. Baxter since the war, what part he has played in his own country and what his views are to-day. Many of us who shared his opinions in the war and who have the deepest respect for his philosophy have been compelled to modify our position because we felt it our duty in time of peace, not only to protest against all war, but also to prevent the next one. And that meant political action which inevitably at some point involves the acceptance of the possibility of relying on armed force. If international war does come there will be a larger number of Christians attempting like Mr. Baxter to stand against this final exploitation of humanity, but the effective revolt is more likely to come (perhaps first in Totalitarian countries) from the soldiers themselves, and their resistance will not be of the passive kind.

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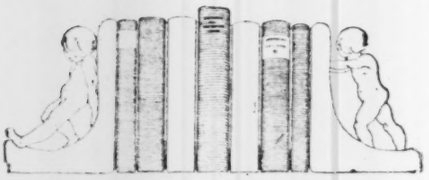

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HORRIBILE DICTU

OTHER people's vicissitudes are fascinating—fascinating to read about, to be told of, to witness, to do anything but share. Nothing is more agreeable than the story of things going wrong at the So-and-Sos'. To hear of an occasion going off perfectly smoothly leaves one a little flat. The untoward is popular : children like stories to be as dreadful as possible ; later, we all like to have some unfortunate friends. Love, money, health, social ambition or home life will never cease to make topics, because in these spheres things are constantly going wrong. It is nicer to hear of *contretemps* than to assist at them—to be present always may mean to be involved. And ideally, small disagreeablenesses should happen to friends' friends, not to friends of one's own. The (small) awful things that do happen should seem likely, never *too* probable. In fact, the occurrence should stay set back at a distance : it is then not too painful, and more easy to see.

> It almost makes me cry to tell
> What foolish Harriet befell. . . .

Struwwelpeter has model openings, and *Struwwelpeter* should be the narrator's model, in the long run.

Mrs. Mary Wylde's book* about her vicissitudes has got this kind of threatening note on the cover, and is absorbing most of the way through. It is (I suppose) a book written to inculcate pity for women and kindness to the middle class. It should also explain why women, well-to-do women, look so obsessed or aggrieved, and why they are never having a nicer time. The middle class looks to its women to keep the flag flying : they do. Exactly what flag, and why ? This Mrs. Wylde, wisely, does not begin to explain, and why should she ? As a character, she is vigorous rather than sympathetic. She shows what a woman with two boys away at public schools, a husband, two maidservants, a four-storied house in Kensington, a fur coat, a Dutch garden, an old Morris has to stand up against. Constantly let down, done down, played up and put upon—you only begin to know what Kensington women suffer when you are into the pages of Mrs. Wylde. And the conclusion you reach, if you do reach a conclusion, is that this part of London should have a Mothers' Day. Any house in any one of those streets and squares may be being the scene of a *supplice* like Mrs. Wylde's. At the same time, Kensington is a matriarchy, and over the door of every home might be graven : " Remember, this all comes very hard on *me*."

She opens :

> Behold a late-Georgian house with cream stucco walls, blue front door, shining brass knocker, Dutch garden all abloom, and a window-box gay with pink ivy-leaf geranium. . . . You are interested in houses ? Then come into mine and see what happens beyond the blue-painted door with the gleaming knocker. Like the man in the fairy-tale, put on the cloak of invisibility, keep close to my elbow, and you may follow my adventures in housekeeping and share such thoughts as I wish to disclose.

As an invitation, this is sufficiently sinister ; in fact it is rather more like a challenge.

Kensington looks inscrutable because it looks dull, and one is willing to let the dull stay inscrutable. There is so much of it, all façades and trees. It is a neighbourhood, or a quarter, about which many people have already been fairly funny and rather spitefully rude. It represents so much money, pretty soundly invested and dully spent. It is a mentality in architecture : you wonder what it might look like as an extensive ruin, and like to leave it at that. But when Mrs. Wylde—obligingly, and with a short of gloomy mixture of resignation and pride—rolls back on a hinge the entire front of her house, the world inside (is it inside all these houses ?) immediately springs into existence, and is very frightening indeed. Here is a world governed by class neurosis, in which employed and employers are hyper-conscious of each other's hostile existences the whole time. Mrs. Wylde is a plucky woman ; she displays reserves of culture, humour, idealism. Her maids lack culture, humour, idealism : in fact, they seem to be simply sluttish and warped. Maids come and go, but they all turn out just like this. Mrs. Wylde loves order but, no doubt rightly, does not attempt style. At most, she " indulges in a little mild entertaining," but though she lunches alone she always has pudding for lunch. The trouble is that order bores almost all maids, but they will do anything for a bit of style. Can it be possible, also, that maids do not care for culture, humour, idealism ?

Inevitably, Mrs. Wylde has her pessimistic moments. She asks herself if, in a generation or two, there will be many of " our kind " left. At intervals during the year this journal covers she shuts herself up in an upper floor of the house in what seems to be an acute state of nervous siege. Once or twice she is shot right out of the house by some sheer malevolent pressure. At times, she shows persecution mania—and really, who can wonder ? The plumber bungles her boiler, the furrier bungles her fur coat, the maids of course bungle everything, woodlice get at the Dutch garden, poison gets at the cat, the flap comes off the gateleg table before a small tea-party, the acid content of a battery gets upset on the drawing-room carpet and all the way up the stairs. All this means expense.

None of these troubles can be peculiar to Kensington—perhaps, though, the so very acute reaction to them is ? To *suffer* in this way, one must be a woman of character, a woman intended for better things and at the same time distinctly not getting them. Mrs. Wylde is a writer, as well as a great reader—when she feels played out she goes to bed with a book. " In my last year at school I had to choose whether I would specialise in botany or literature, and I never ceased to be glad that I chose the latter. It is a perennial interest." It is not only this, but it breeds a view of oneself. Seeking peace in the old nursery from the banging and hammering that are endemic in her house—for these Kensington homes always seem to be cracking up, flaking off, smoking, warping or leaking—she pegs away at her writing. Though : " I am no Mrs. Jellaby, I am afraid, to neglect the family and let extraneous interests take first place."

Mrs. Wylde goes out now and then, and how I wish she would tell us more about parties she goes to. She does tell us about the musical society, whose practices took place in a converted public house, and about her dustman who whistled Vaughan Williams and appeared at the society's festival in a dinner jacket, " looking as fresh and smart as any public school man. Dustmen, I know, are well paid nowadays, but a dustman in a dinner jacket is an unexpected sight." Mrs. Wylde, being a writer, is interested in human nature ; she has a conversation with a fishmonger about his mad wife, with a plumber who turns out to *be* a public school man, with a hair-dresser girl about marriage and home-making, while she is getting her hair waved. The vividness of these conversations makes me wish more and more that Mrs. Wylde would tell us about her own set. Here is one picture only :

> I enjoy a good laugh as much as anything. I don't know many women who are devoid of humour, and often their appreciation of the incongruous is sharper than that of men, as the following anecdote will perhaps illustrate.

* *A Housewife in Kensington.* By Mary Wylde. Longmans. 8*s.* 6*d.*

A friend was being presented with the head of a tiger by the man who had shot it in India. Dramatically he described how his bearer saw the beast and tried to shoot it, but the safety catch of the gun was down. Quickly he seized the gun from the native—aimed, and brought down the animal. Whereupon another man who was listening to the story, immediately countered, in all solemnity, "Talking of safety catches on guns, I was out shooting rabbits the other day . . ." He did not finish the sentence, for it was drowned by the laughter of his wife.

Once one has read Mrs. Wylde, she becomes a companion. *A Housewife in Kensington* contains all sorts of passages you are certain to want to mark. It is not, in the strict sense, a very *useful* book, not a book to turn to for household hints—in fact, there are hints that one could give Mrs. Wylde. *Should* she have been so flummoxed when she had to do the cooking, and, in that case, why insist on a treacle sponge? Why is it wicked to go to a restaurant when you have not, for the time being, got any cook and make such heavy weather about cooking, yourself? Why all this cellar trouble; what about Mr. Therm? . . . No, this is a chatty more than a helpful book. It is an addition to vicissitude literature; I take it to be a fair picture of Kensington, and it is a most striking self-portrait of a lady, by Mrs. Mary Wylde. ELIZABETH BOWEN

MATTHEW ARNOLD

Matthew Arnold. By LIONEL TRILLING. *Allen and Unwin.* 15s.

For a generation now the unwavering assertion has been out of fashion. To those, therefore, who have accepted as unquestionable this divorce between the intellectual and the pontiff Matthew Arnold appears as a kind of centaur, remote, laboriously classic, suspect from the mere fact of existing. It is not that he is out of fashion, for he has never been fashionable; nor that his work has ceased to influence. Simply, to ears trained to the more tremulous boom of his inheritors, he seems to show a certain want of tact, a certain poverty of the heart, which throw his insistence and solemnity into unpleasant relief.

The object of Mr. Trilling's quite excellent book is to unify the currents of his thought and relate them to the events of his time. Biographical detail and purely literary criticism are only incidental to an intellectual synthesis. It is a book which might have been valuably dull; and the dust-cover does not suggest that the publishers are optimists. But as a matter of fact it is among the best books of American criticism since *Axel's Castle*; lucid, unbiased, and sensible. Mr. Trilling's reading is enormous, and the indexes are a model of their kind.

A living Arnold emerges; but not a unified one. In fact, the dominant impression is that Arnold took too literally the general advice of John Hunter: "*Don't think*, try and be patient." Only to name his influences, Spinoza and Joubert, Hegel and Byron, Coleridge and George Sand, destroys any idea of unity. "I am fragments," he wrote to his sister "K"; and, more profoundly, what Mr. Trilling writes of his belief in a supernal law can be applied to most of his teaching: "He does not know, he cannot be sure." He reproaches Clough with lack of integration, yet in the end, with the passing of his own poetic faculties, he falls into the same impasse. The grave critic who tried so seriously to compose the differences of the individual and society is less of a whole man than Lord Lansdowne's elegant secretary; and perhaps it is not fanciful to detect, under his inconsistencies, the same struggle to escape from an unwilling conclusion as that, thirty years earlier, of which Mr. Trilling writes:

> However frequently Arnold may recur to the Spinozistic simplicity that Nature is without mind or personality, he is ever trying some new subtlety to deny what he has affirmed.

The suppression of *Empedocles* between 1853 and 1867 may have been a prophylactic gesture.

We know that he set no great store by philosophical consistency in his poetry. Mr. Trilling insists that he is usually a poet not so much by grace as by works, with a rider that "there is one mood that assures Arnold the lyric gift—the mood of self-commiseration." In all he attempts—and the opposing poles of his creative faculty may be taken as *The Strayed Reveller* and *Resignation*—his urgent sense of honesty is liable to cut across his argument, until the total intellectual content of his work tumbles into precisely those vague generalisations which he was trying to correct. It is curious to notice that in his best early verse he was working from much the same premises, though with quite different results, at Mölderlin; and to observe how the opposing Arnold, the didactic Arnold of *Resignation*, alternately cramps and is deflected by the pure poetry even when that strayed reveller, in after years, lies half-buried beneath a chaotic flow of fine perceptions and muddled hopes. "He is basically confused," says Mr. Trilling, enlarging on a comment of Bradley's, "about the nature of fact and verification." In short, as a guide, he is unreliable. Finally the Arnold that remains vital is the lyric poet, the literary critic, the apostle of disinterest; not the social thinker who would to-day be astonished to find how neatly his theory of the function of the State coincides with Fascism, nor the pragmatist who was prepared to give any edifying certificate to Christianity except that it is true; of whom Mr. Trilling acutely observes that his entire religious theory had been formed to supply the lacks of the French Revolution.

In a short review it is only possible to touch the surface of this long and fascinating book. There are many tangents to the main theme, and Mr. Trilling is capable, on occasion, of a refreshing dryness as when, writing of Arnold's position in the America of the '80s, he comments: "Interest in his work has been of slow growth. . . . Henry James had been almost his only passionate admirer, surely a guarantee of his countrymen's indifference." And there is a picture of the deutero-Arnold, to whom legend is generally unkind, in a letter of Gamaliel Bradford describing his visit as a young worshipper to the old poet in Boston. "Our talk amounted to nothing. . . . When I finally left him, he patted my shoulder and remarked paternally, 'What is the age?' Matthew Arnold has never meant so much to me since."

ALAN PRYCE-JONES

AMERICAN IMMIGRANT

My America, 1928-1938. By LOUIS ADAMIC. *Hamish Hamilton.* 15s.

On the base of the Statue of Liberty, in New York harbour, these words are written:

> Give me your tired, your poor,
> Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
> The wretched refuse of your teeming shore,
> Send these, the homeless, the tempest-tost, to me:
> I lift my lamp beside the golden door.

Louis Adamic was one of the "huddled masses." He went to America from Jugoslavia as a child. He became a United States citizen while in the army during the world war. He is one of the most thoughtful and sympathetic critics of the American experiment.

It often happens that the recent immigrant makes a better American than the man whose family immigrated in the seventeenth or eighteenth century. The man who chose America of his own free will is at least aware of what he hoped to find. He is not likely to forget what he felt when he first saw that statue, lifting its lamp beside the golden door. He is not likely to close his eyes to the tawdry or the cruel aspects of American life. He will have so clear a picture of what America might be that he cannot help but quarrel with her for what she is. "America, I hate you so because I love you so."

Louis Adamic's book is a rambling commentary, almost as formless as a diary. It gives one man's personal impressions of America in the ten years since "Coolidge prosperity." In 1928 America was self-satisfied and gross. She thought that she had found the answers to the major problems of politics and economics. She seemed to think that man was born into this world in order that each year he might make a little more money than he had made the year before. In 1938 America was a more humble and a more dignified country. Adversity had reminded her of her great heritage. And the world-challenge to democracy, the contempt for democracy expressed by the leaders of half mankind, had taught America that the virtues which she once possessed had to be re-earned in each generation.

Louis Adamic, in his rambling account of his own experiences during these critical ten years, shows the American mind remaking itself, shows the people trying to return to the serious business of life, having grown disillusioned with Success. Mr. Adamic is not arguing for any one political or economic faith. He is a friend of the working-man, whose life he has shared. He is a natural democrat. He loves America but is never fooled into believing that she has yet lived up to her pretensions. And he knows life in Central Europe, so he has a standard of comparison. His book is of intense interest to an American, and should be of value to anyone seeking to understand the complications of life in the United States. HERBERT AGAR

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THE TALKING BRONCO

Flowering Rifle. By ROY CAMPBELL. *Longmans.* 6*s.*

The great difficulty in creating any work of art about a subject chosen directly from the contemporary scene is to give it such coherence of theme, imagination and plot, that the whole work seems to exist independently of the reality by which it is inspired. A work that makes one constantly refer back to the outside reality, remains journalism or pamphleteering—however ingenious and excellent it may be in detail. Satire is bound to contain certain elements of reportage, because the whole point lies in its reference to external events : but the greatest satires of Swift, Dryden and Pope survive because, in spite of their references to contemporary figures and events of varying importance, these poets managed to create legends and symbols which still hold our interest.

So the question one must ask concerning Mr. Campbell's poem is : What is it about ? In the first place, it is an incoherent, biased, unobjective, highly coloured and distorted account of one man's experiences of the Spanish war, seen through the eyes of a passionate partisan of Franco. Although I strongly disagree with Mr. Campbell's politics, I do not think that a work of this kind should be condemned either on the poet's opinions or even the degree of objective truth he attains, if he creates some artistic unity which has an existence of its own. But beyond this mass of reportage, what does Mr. Campbell offer us ? Very little, I am afraid. The poem, as a whole, has no unity of design, no sustained argument, no plot, no single vision. It is a kind of three-decker sandwich consisting of one layer of invective against the intellectuals of the Left, the International Brigade, the Spanish Republican Army, etc. ; a second layer of autobiography concerning the exploits of Mr. Campbell and his flowering rifle ; and a top layer of rhapsody about Franco and his colleagues, who are treated as nothing less than angels. The transitions from one motif to another seem to spring from no inner logic in the poem itself, and, particularly when he is being autobiographical, the actual circumstances of the poem are often very obscure. Mr. Campbell relies far too much on the reader's knowledge of the Spanish War.

A fellow-reviewer had the temerity to accuse Mr. Campbell of automatically equivocating " Right " and " Wrong " with " Right " and " Left." In a long reply, Mr. Campbell explained that the " reiterated and monotonous theme of the whole thing . . . is the Harvest." Reiterated and monotonous this deathly Harvest certainly is, but a mere symbol of Franco's Victory does not provide the poem with a unifying theme, which it lacks. What it does have, is passages of violent and sometimes effective satire, and occasional rhapsodic passages of a certain power, in which Mr. Campbell has always excelled. Here is a good example of the rhapsodic style :

> And so must Spain to passing stars appear
> Two-thirds illumed as in the lunar sphere
> And all the rest besmeared with greed and lust,
> But there a scythe of light the darkness reaping
> And there a sword with dented edges sweeping :
> And often have I blest her humble dust
> Sure of the sacred treasure in its keeping,
> That holy, holy, holy was the rust
> Wherein those twin Excaliburs were sleeping.

Admirers of Mr. Campbell's earlier work may notice here a certain falling off in the intensity of his glowing repertoire of images, so I quote an example of the satire at its best :

> And, see, the Bullring to its use restored,
> Where late the loud, half-hourly " Meeting " roared
> For every time the bolsheviks are routed,
> Why, sure, a meeting must be held about it,
> Which held, and many resolutions passed,
> They seek a bigger trouncing than the last,
> And then a bigger meeting than the beating,
> And so the endless rigmarole repeating,
> From meeting to defeat, defeat to meeting,
> From rout to rout so rapidly they switch
> That nobody could tell you which was which.

But these passages are exceptions ; they are stones of a certain lustre buried under ignoble sweepings of every kind of anti-Semitic and atrocity propaganda, of boasting and bullying from the *Stürmer* and the speeches of dictators. Mr. Campbell lacks the swaggering impertinence of the Italian bully, which takes pleasure in violence for its own sake ; he excels rather in the Saxon and Anglo-Saxon form which seeks to justify itself, so that whilst he repeats every exploded propagandist rationalisation of the Cause to which he adheres, every inversion of the witnessed fact (such as that the " Reds " destroyed Guernica), he also indulges in the degrading abuse of a Julius Streicher :

> The least fastidious Element we knew,
> That loves the chill, webbed hand-clasp of the Jew.

There are several passages in this book which make me feel physically sick. Finally, the undiscriminating abuse of the enemy defeats its own ends, because if we are to believe Mr. Campbell, there can be little merit in defeating an army which never does anything but run. All sense of conflict is lost when his verminous adjectives culminate in the defiant :

> The bronco Life, with angry snort of fire,
> Has ever boomeranged four feet entire
> And stamped him like a cockroach in the mire.

Mr. Campbell indignantly repudiates the accusation that he is a Romantic. He is quite right, for the Romantics were distinguished by their disinterested passion for truth, equalled only by their love of freedom and justice. The bronco Life ! Perhaps that phrase gets nearer the mark. Mr. Wyndham Lewis diagnosed the Dumb Ox in Hemingway's novels. Here we have the Talking Bronco, the Brute Life armed with abusive words and, most unfortunately, not with Mr. Campbell's Flowering Rifle, but with Flowering Machine Guns, Flowering Henkels, Flowering Capronis

STEPHEN SPENDER

DUALISM AND DIALECTIC

The Clue to History. By JOHN MACMURRAY. *Student Christian Movement Press.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

As the confusion of our times increases, the demand for clarification grows. Insistently men demand a thread to guide them through the maze and threads are accordingly provided. Consider, for example, the number of clues to history which have been offered to us during the last half century. There is the Marxist clue in terms of economic determinism and the Spenglerian clue in terms of culture and civilisation ; there is the evolutionary clue (momentarily out of fashion) which bids us regard human beings as instruments of life created to give conscious expression to its instinctive urge and there is the Christian view which regards human history (surprisingly, as I cannot help thinking) as a revelation of God's increasing purpose. I recently reviewed here a book by John Katz (*The Will to Civilization*) which interpreted history dialectically as the result of a conflict between spontaneity and synthesis. Finally, there are those who do not hesitate to abjure clues altogether as they insist that the life of human communities, like that of individuals, is without point or purpose, and that history is simply one damned thing after another. Not, however, Professor Macmurray, who sees history as a succession of backslidings from true religion, which is unitary and whole, into a series of untenable dualisms.

Professor Macmurray is in the strict sense of the word a revolutionary writer ; he touches nothing which he does not overturn. Deep in the mud at the stagnant bottom of one's mind lie the old boulders of accepted conclusion and unexamined assumption. Macmurray stretches out a hand, prises them up and turns them over. When the resultant disturbance has begun to subside and the waters to clear, darting about in all directions one descries shoals of little fish : they are new ideas. Excitedly one spears for them as John Ridd once speared for loaches in the Exe ; but, unfortunately, they are exceedingly elusive. Have you pinned one down ? Unfortunately, you can never be sure. Probably all that you have done is to capture not one of Professor Macmurray's ideas, but the nearest thing to it which your own mind is capable of entertaining.

And so it is with something less than one's usual confidence that one sets out to describe this book. Macmurray is himself aware of the difficulty. He is, he tells us, on the horns of a dilemma. The object of the book is to throw new light upon Christianity and upon the Jewish problem in relation to Christianity ; but Christianity has been perverted. Now our habits of thought have been derived from the perverted Christian tradition ; the meaning which we give to Christianity has been fixed and falsified by the Church. Yet upon these habits Macmurray must rely in order to reveal their inadequacy ; upon the basis of the acceptance of this meaning he must seek to demonstrate its falsity. Stated badly, his argument is this. The true religion, which is Christianity, is universal. Of this true religion the Jews were the originators. For them alone religion was all-embracing and all-pervasive. It is not merely that they did not recognise the accepted division between other-worldliness on Sundays and worldliness on week-

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days. For them there was no line of cleavage between this world and the next, and, therefore, no cleavage between religion which is of the next world and science, politics, art and medicine which are of this. Again religion teaches that we are all equals in the sight of God, and thus for the Jews, the only truly religious people, there was no division between leader and led or between race and race.

As a result of a series of historical accidents the Jews forget their true Jewishness, which is international, and go a-whoring after such concepts as nationalism and imperialism. Their tradition, the true tradition, is taken over by the early Christians who, again by an accident of history, being without a country have no temptation to separatism or nationalism. Presently, however, the early Christian Church obtains power with the result that a series of dualisms, rifts in the whole which is true religion, begin to appear. Most of Macmurray's book is devoted to an examination of these dualisms, the principle applied being that of the Hegelian dialectic. There is a dualism between this world and the next, between theory and practice, between Caesar and God, between our duty as a citizen and our duty as a Christian, between creation in the spiritual sphere and lack of creation in the sexual (witness the monastic monk), between power and wealth in this world which is material, and no power and no wealth in the next which is spiritual (witness the Victorian business man). Now each of these dualisms being contradictory leads dialectically to the supersession of the two opposed concepts. Each partial concept, that is to say, is negated, the negation is negated in its turn and both are then transcended in a higher synthesis. Such, it appears, is the realisation of God's purpose in the world.

The working out of this process leads Professor Macmurray into the oddest paradoxes. For example, in the modern world those who deny God and seek to destroy the Church are "the bearers of the Christian intention." An even odder paradox is that which establishes the Jewishness of Hitler: (i) The Jews negate their own religion when they seek to become the chosen people. (ii) The Germans have followed the Jews in trying to become the chosen people. (iii) There cannot be two chosen peoples; hence (iv) it is by means of their own Jewishness that the Germans are endeavouring to destroy the Jews, and Hitler's persecution is expressing his own "inferiority complex" in relation to those who first staked out their claim to be the chosen race.

The appearance of Hitler marks the climax of western civilisation, or, rather, it brings to its climax the peculiar dualism of western civilisation which is the dualism between theory and practice. Conceding "the root principles of rationality—equality, freedom and universal community" as truths, western civilisation has refused their application in "the practical field of material life." Now "the reality of human life is action, not thought." Therefore, while conceding Christian principles in theory, we have refused them in practice. In Fascism this dualism achieves its inevitable end:

> It has succeeded in making the world of the spirit—the world of freedom, equality and humanity, of ideals and religion and culture—another world; and *this* world has become in consequence a world of dark unconscious forces of destruction. It has insisted that the realisation of humanity shall be postponed to another life, and so has made in humanity the automatic law of this life. It has decided that the Kingdom of God shall be a kingdom in heaven, and delivered this world over to the powers of darkness.

It would be presumptuous to try to criticise so important a book in a few lines at the end of a review, yet I cannot refrain from expressing my feeling that Professor Macmurray is on occasion too clever by half. The dialectic in his hands is like the paradox in those of G. K. C.; his use of it suggests at times that conjurer who is prepared to produce on request practically any animal out of the same hat. So consistently do things turn into their opposites, so infallibly do the negations get negated, that one feels no assurance that Macmurray's own thought will not at any moment turn round and negate itself. And what precisely is dualism? We are not told. Nevertheless, this is in many ways a great book and it is a book that we should all be the better for reading. C. E. M. JOAD

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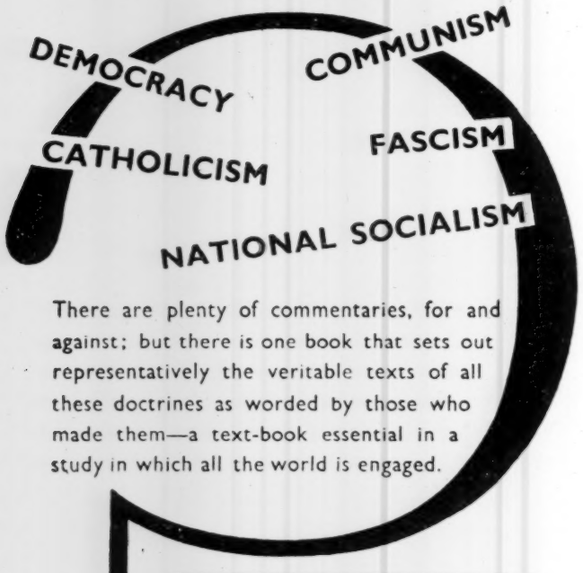

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Drop to His Death. By JOHN RHODE and CARTER DICKSON. *Heinemann.* 7s. 6d.

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Dead Men Sing No Songs. By MIRANDA STUART. *Hodder and Stoughton.* 7s. 6d.

Murder in the Bud. By PHYLLIS BOTTOME. *Faber and Faber.* 7s. 6d.

The Great Game. By H. C. BAILEY. *Gollancz.* 7s. 6d.

Under the Long Barrow. By CHRISTOPHER HADDON. *Gollancz.* 7s. 6d.

Murder from Three Angles. By J. RUSSELL WARREN. *Heinemann.* 7s. 6d.

If one author can write one good detective novel in one year, how long will it take for six authors to write a good novel in collaboration? All eternity. It does not require the resources of Mass Observation to find the obvious answer to such a question. You can make doubly certain of getting a negative result, if you require each author to write a chapter in succession, improvising the plot as they go along. This experiment was tried by the Editor of the *Sunday Chronicle*, using some of the best personnel available; and the result is *Double Death*, a triumphant vindication of the laws of Art over the desires of Man. Miss Sayers was lucky to get the easy job of providing the first chapter with an assortment of suspects and clues and staging the first murder. Thenceforward each distinguished author trips up over his predecessor, and concludes his contribution to the text with pages of exculpatory notes, explaining why it is not *his* fault the plot has got out of hand: the notes to the later chapters sink from pathos to despair. To the reader, accustomed to flinch before these formidable intellects, their hopeless struggle brings a certain sniggering satisfaction. Like schoolboys in a trance we watch the classical masters put on one after another by God to construe a hopelessly corrupt passage in Aeschylus, and making a hash of it. Eventually "the all-seeing eye of God" (in the shape of Mr. John Chancellor) is tempted to try and make sense of all he sees by interpolating an introduction and blue-pencilling the

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incorrigible text. This *deus ex machina* succeeds in giving away the solution before the book even begins : an act of divine retribution on six authors in search of a plot.

Drop to his Death is the product of another collaboration, this time more successful. I have no doubt Mr. John Rhode did his share, but the master mind of Mr. Carter Dickson is revealed in the consummate ingenuity with which the crime is perpetrated. You cannot shoot men at close range, alone in their private lifts, with all the doors closed, and the lift itself whizzing down. Yet that is how someone got Sir Ernest Tallant ! I wish readers joy of the solution. The rest of the story, with its love-interest and a jaunty account of the intrigues in the office of a newspaper combine, is very subsidiary to Mr. Carter Dickson's *tour de force*.

The ladies' department contributes five novels this month, of which I particularly recommend *Hasty Wedding* and *They Rang Up the Police*. Mrs. Eberhart puts the screws on our nervous mechanism with her usual persistence. A bride pays a farewell visit to her discarded lover on the eve of her wedding. Next morning she hears that he has committed suicide (shock No. 1) ; as her marriage ceremony concludes her husband whispers " I know you killed Ronald " (shock No. 2) ; and so it goes on. Mrs. Eberhart knows how to ring all the changes of mental and physical anxiety ; and her poor bride is given the whole works. The reader escapes much of this anxiety, knowing the authoress's addiction to a happy ending. In *Hasty Wedding* this tender-heartedness almost amounts to a blemish : as the number of suspects is limited, once you have ruled out the necessary participants in a cheerful *dénouement*, what have you left but the criminal ? Still, even if happy endings could go out of fashion, it would be cruel to ask Mrs. Eberhart to be the first to ring wedding bells out of tune.

They Rang Up the Police is Miss Cannan's first detective novel, and, it is to be sincerely hoped, will not be her last. Her mature experience of novel-writing enables her to keep her characters on the move in a supple, life-like way that old muscle-bound detective authors must envy. The scene of the crime is a household of three middle-aged, middle-class spinsters living in the country with their monster of an old mother. The internal workings of life at Marley Grange are depicted with hideous realism ; no wonder one of the old maids gets murdered. The only character who seems at all out of key in this *Symphonie Bourgeoise* is the Scotland Yard detective, when he arrives on the stage ; possibly because his processes have to be intellectual, whereas the authoress is at her happiest analysing the sordid emotions. For the detective part of the plot (a tricky business which she wisely does not underestimate), Miss Cannan is content to provide a wide range of motive and plenty of opportunity for every one ; and the reader will be wise to go all out on psychological deduction and disregard all but one of the physical clues.

Miss Fitt's tendency to confuse action and motive in an impenetrable tangle with nothing but loose threads protruding, is shown again in *Death at Dancing Stones*. Body of financier found at dawn on a beach ; every one hates him, fears him or was about to marry him. Miss Fitt is eager, lively, but obsessed with a fear that she has not provided enough red herrings to make her dish palatable. Mrs. Stewart could do with some of Miss Fitt's surplus fish. *Dead Men Sing No Songs* is, I regret to say, as plain as a pikestaff. Clue after clue points with unerring accuracy at the guilty party—there was an ingenious one that I missed, but what is one among so many ? The idea of the plot (which cannot be described without prejudicing the authoress's slender chances of pulling off her mystification) is admirably sound ; but the difficulty of playing fair by the reader and at the same time misleading him has not been mastered at all.

Miss Bottome is another professional novelist trying her hand at a crime plot, only in *Murder in the Bud* the crime does not take place after all. A female Czecho-Slovak psycho-analyst, with perfect poise but no charm, interferes at the last moment by will-power and argument to prevent Hilda poisoning her ex-lover. The merit of the book resides in the vivid and painful analysis of Hilda's anguish of mind while bracing herself for the deed.

Mr. H. C. Bailey has once more taken out his plump bloodhound, Mr. Fortune, for a long run in the country, with only three bodies to play with. Mr. Fortune is a glutton for corpses, being schooled to get one every chapter, and these prolonged expeditions on short commons take it out of an animal with his physique. *The Great Game* is amusing with all Mr. Bailey's studied mannerisms, but personally I find it a strain to watch Mr. Fortune running out of his distance. No amount of art can camouflage the puffing and blowing.

Under the Long Barrow is by a new author who approaches murder from one of these " new angles "—at a tangent, I hazard. The publisher denies that it is a detective story ; but there is a crime, an unknown killer and a proper solution of mystery ; and a " thriller " would be a misnomer for an extremely well-written account in diary form of a strange concatenation of persons and events that result in murder. Mr. Haddon employs an economical austere style ; and the only fault I can find with the book is that new angle, which prevents the plot making the impressive contact with the reader, which the author's remarkable talent deserves. I can safely, however, urge every one who relishes a novelty to sample Mr. Haddon's first performance.

Angles again ! *Murder from Three Angles* is not based on the eternal triangle in spite of its title ; the angles, however, are almost equally familiar : the murderer, the first detective (wrong), and the second detective (blind, crippled in an invalid chair, but right). I like these old angles, and Mr. Russell Warren's version of them is in the tradition, Part One jam, Part Two sticky, and Part Three Birds Custard Powder—not a bad pudding.

RALPH PARTRIDGE

INSIDE OUT

The World and Ourselves. By LAURA RIDING AND 65 OTHERS. *Chatto and Windus.* 15*s*.

When a reviewer is stumped by a book he can at least perform the necessary task of saying what it appears to contain, leaving it gingerly at that ; and as I cannot pretend to understand all Miss Riding has written about in this formidable volume, I must treat it thus.

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rushes out into the streets and hooks on to whichever crowd it is whose marching and shouting most pleases him.

Miss Riding's first reaction to this situation was to write a long letter attempting to define it. To her, life is ultimately an affair of personal relationships. All that matters occurs inside the houses, in the personal lives of "inside" people, particularly women. The houses are washed by a stream of outside affairs which would be relatively trivial if they flowed smoothly, and are no less trivial now that the traffic is completely blocked. Outsidedness, all the way down from international relationships to the milkman's rounds, are none of the business of the good insider, who will only turn himself inside out and lose virtue if he externalises himself in a misguided attempt to direct the traffic. The true insiders, guardians of reality and truth and exponents of the good life, are few and scattered, though elect. The pressure of outsidedness upon them has long exceeded a bad joke. What are they to do, to help themselves—and to help the raving outsiders?

Miss Riding sent her letter to 400 correspondents, some obscure, some celebrated intellectuals. She received about 100 replies, and prints 65 of them, each with a comment of her own. The replies are a pretty good lot. Between them they give inside-outsidedness a very thorough worrying. I could understand them all; all are very earnest; some are wise, a few brilliant. Miss Riding's comments are much longer than the replies: I frequently could not understand them. This part of her book reminds me of the correction of essays by a headmistress with rather more inside knowledge than her pupils, and shatteringly more than my own. The distinction, in nature and function, between inside and outside people runs its labyrinthine course with a relentless volubility. It seems to me a pity that Miss Riding's labyrinths should not sometimes be reinforced with concrete, but her notion of good "inside" writing is a steadfast abstractness; one must it seems be real, not realistic. She begins by saying that she is not going to name the world's troubles and troublers; she never does; and as for the various solutions which have been proposed, she damns them in a remarkably comprehensive list, rejecting "any solution that does not happen inside yourselves and accomplish itself through what is going on in you. Or, to leave no room for doubt, let me say simply: any solution that has ever in any way been tried before. What does this leave?"

Well, it seems to leave a lot. Miss Riding shakes off her correspondents and ends with 14 stiff recommendations for inside action (occupying 150 pages) and 27 resolutions for insiders (occupying only 10). My progress through the recommendations was rather slow as I was held up by instructions such as this on "The proper attitude and approach to the Multitudes and their problems":—

> Thus, in order to tell expressively what must not be, the margin admits of the possibility of things that must not be in order to reject them as impossible. All its power of margining off the impossible from existence, of telling what must not be, it derives from the inner reality, that tells what must be. It does not know that its power is derivative, it does not know that it even has this power. It knows nothing, is merely an automatically moving margin: verging toward the impossible things as they are temporarily capable of creating the illusion that they are possible, pulled back from them by the force of the inner reality. And the multitudes, and all the spaces of outer life, are of this movable margin . . .

How pleasant after this to reach the Resolutions, which are almost epigrammatic, are full of good hard stoic sense, and might I think be adopted even by one who had never studied the difference between inside and out. If I may add the recommendation of a rank outsider, it is that this book should be begun, and, if human frailty permits, finished and understood.

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Cast Off All Fooling. By JOHN SCANLON. *Hutchinson.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

Beyond Politics. By CHRISTOPHER DAWSON. *Sheed and Ward.* 3*s.* 6*d.*

At a time when any active expression of a minority opinion in the Labour Party may result in expulsion, those of us who, like Galileo recant heresy, muttering under our breath *Eppur si muove,* can take a certain vicarious pleasure in the open heresies of others. Perhaps that is part of the reason why I greatly enjoyed reading the three books on my list. All of them are far too well written and too lively to pass the censorship of the political party. Mr. Scanlon has long since given up any belief in party politics, Mr. Williamson in the Labour Party as at present constituted; while Mr. Dawson views the State *sub specie aeternitatis.* And yet, despite the political censor, they all have something of importance to say, something indeed which our Labour leaders would do well to ponder.

Mr. Williamson is a cousin of the Chancellor of the Exchequer and Labour candidate for East Dorset. His approach to Socialism is that of the consistent Liberal who sees that his ideal of social equality and individual freedom can be achieved only through the public control of the economic system. Looking to the Labour Party as the instrument for the achievement of these political objectives, he inevitably finds that its close connection with the Trade Unions prevents its ever being a democratic movement in the liberal sense of the word. The Party is so much dominated by the Trade Union leaders, and Trade Union ideology, that it is primarily interested not in the realisation of social-democracy, but in alleviating the hardships of the industrial worker under the existing system Mr. Williamson is passionately concerned for civil liberty, for freedom of the Press, and for the abolition of class-distinctions, and his restatement of the Socialist case in the language of old-fashioned radicalism is refreshingly straightforward. He scores so many bull's-eyes that it is a pity that he should have allowed himself a "sensational" attack on the Parliamentary Labour Party which can easily be rebutted by any experienced politician. But *Who is For Liberty?* should be useful in any area where Trade Unionism is not well-established.

Cast Off All Fooling is yet another of those racy exposures of the Labour politicians which Mr. Scanlon, now he has turned from manual labour to intellectual pursuits, is turning out with such profitable rapidity. His philosophy is the precise contrary of that of Mr. Williamson. Whereas the latter longs for a Socialist party freed from Trade Union domination, Mr. Scanlon urges the Unions to cut loose from the politicians and the intellectuals, to accept National Government as a permanent in-

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But *Cast Off All Fooling* is an important book. For Mr. Scanlon is saying publicly those things which many Trade Union leaders are doing and saying privately. His hatred of intellectuals, contempt for politicians and disbelief in Socialism are shared in influential quarters and lead, strangely enough, to precisely the position reached by Mr. Williamson. Speaking for the Trade Union leaders, Mr. Scanlon wishes them to give up politics, while Mr. Williamson, as a politician, wants the Labour Party to give up the Unions. Each brings a host of arguments to reinforce the other's case.

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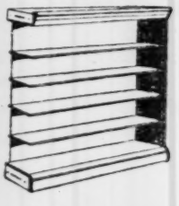

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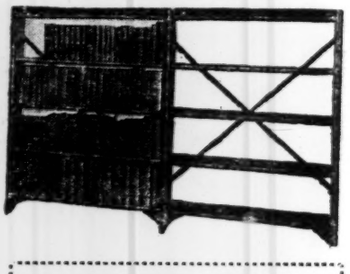

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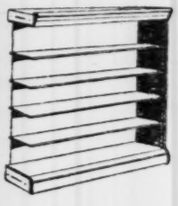

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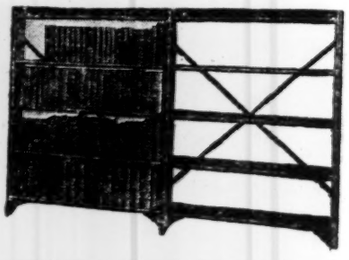

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NEW NOVELS

And then the Harvest. By FIODOR PANFEROV. Translated by STEPHEN GARRY. *Putnam.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

The Man Below. By H. T. HOPKINSON. *Hogarth Press.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

Over the Mountain. By RUTHVEN TODD. *Harrap.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

And then the Harvest comes from Russia. Though it is diffuse, vague, episodic and naive, it is not without literary merit. But it is for its documentary rather than its artistic interest that it held my attention; it has something to offer which I am glad to absorb: a panoramic impression of contemporary Russian life as it appears to an energetic and good-natured member of the Party who has never been troubled with intellectual doubts and seldom, I should say, by intellectual problems of any sort. It is important to know what Germany looks like to the *Gauleiter*, and Fiodor Panferov is the Soviet equivalent of a *Gauleiter*. After five years as a provincial journalist, he became local Party Secretary, and thereafter devoted himself to the organisation of his own district into an Agricultural Collective. His book aims at being the epic of the Collectivisation process, considered neither economically nor even politically but from the human point of view. As one of the characters puts it: "Behind the pigs, behind the broken sledges, behind the broken-down tractor stands the most precious of all: the human being." The insistence on personal heroism, on the splendid individual as against the old glorification of the splendid masses, is of course in line with the recent trend of Soviet internal policy and has already been remarked in several Russian films. Heroes are now the thing, and Panferov's book contains a whopping one. It opens with the hero's awakening by the side of his pregnant wife, and the description of sunlight "spurting in at the window" of Kirill's bedroom and of the sounds of the opening day outside promises well: the author has a broad, lyrical response to the elemental manifestations of nature that is in the best traditions of his country's literature. But his view of human beings is almost too elemental. Kirill, setting forth for his morning ride on the sorrel stallion Sulky, is no man but a Superman; only mythical heroes (whether the myth be of the past or the future) have such peculiar relationships with animals as Kirill has with his horse.

Kirill is a member of the Central Executive Committee, and he has prepared a set of detailed plans for the development of the countryside which arouse Stalin's interest and approval. The day comes when he is summoned to an interview in the Kremlin; and now the fearless wrestler with mad stallions learns, like Siegfried before the recumbent Brünhilde, the meaning of fear. "He was completely abashed; he went numb, his face was bathed in sweat." So confused is he that he even forgets to use his handkerchief; and small wonder, for Stalin "did not seem to tread the floor at all, but glided along, all of a piece, with no superfluous movements of hands, head or body." The great man behaves genially enough, pointing out for instance that Kirill has spelt "mistake" "misteak" in his memorandum; and there are instructive minutiae which recall the accounts, at once ecstatic and flat, of Royalty in English papers or of *Der Führer als Mensch* in German. Not until he gets outside the Kremlin gates does Kirill wholly recover his wits; and then

> he strode along, his heels clattering on the stone pavement, and all his bearing indicated: "Look at me! I've just seen Stalin."

Of recently liquidated Party leaders we also catch glimpses, naturally less favourable. Bukharin cuts a very poor figure. "He tripped hurriedly, briskly, like a mouse. He had a little pointed ginger beard, and bald head, yet he looked quite youthful and skittish. 'He looks like a girl who knows she's eligible,' Kirill said." But he was "still more surprised when Zinoviev began to speak in a thin, tinkling, almost girlish voice." Kameniev comes off better; no one can call him girlish, but "other speakers attacked Kameniev and made mincemeat of him." They do not sound a very formidable lot, but they are of course behind the extensive wrecking conspiracy whose exposure by the hero forms a central episode in the plot. It is interesting to read an account of the whole confession and trial routine by an author who takes it all for granted as material for a novel. Varied and weird are the activities revealed by the wreckers' confessions: setting fire to peatfields, pouring millet grain into horses' ears, dispatching weak and hungry peasants on journeys so that they shall die on the road and spread discontent; "nor did we refrain from individual acts of terrorism. Assassination was in the normal course of things." Certain passages of dialogue in the peat fire trial recall Lewis Carroll:

> Thinking Kirill was about to make a speech, the hall unexpectedly died into silence, and willy-nilly he had to go on:
>
> "You know, there's a very good Russian proverb: 'If you agree to be a grey gelding, you're sure to be made an ass of.'"
>
> "There isn't any such proverb. You've just made it up," Lemm snapped back.

If the English reader feels at moments a desire to echo Alice's exclamation "You're all nothing but a pack of cards," he should desist; for the Soviet hierarchy is not a pack of cards, and it is important that we should attempt to grasp the novel kind of mentality induced by totalitarian States in the citizen of average executive capacity and no particular intelligence. And Fiodor Panferov, being an ordinary Party official gifted with an unusual power of self-expression, is worth our careful consideration.

I have so much enjoyed Mr. Hopkinson's stories in *New Writing*, particularly his *No Happy Returns* in the last number, that I took up his first novel with keen anticipations of pleasure. They were not wholly fulfilled: *The Man Below* is an interesting, but rather slight, essay in fictional psychology with a brilliant adventure narrative tacked on to the end of it. Sinbad Woodward (only Wells could get away with a name like that) is a boy of enquiring mind but unusually timid temperament who, whether at home, at school or at the university, can only come to terms with life by standing aloof from the main stream of experience, flattering his fellows (he has no friends) and exhibiting his universal adaptability. His existence is outwardly fairly successful, and Mr. Hopkinson remembers childhood and boyhood well enough, and comments upon them acidly enough, to keep us interested during the earlier part of his book. By the time Sinbad reaches Oxford, however, the theme has begun to pall; and it is at this point that Mr. Hopkinson sends him, with two other undergraduates, on a mad trip in a small fishing-boat across the Irish Channel. This episode is intended to be the psychological climax of the book, providing a situation in which Sinbad must act at last without thought of an audience and grapple with fear in its most primitive form; but the details of the voyage are so brilliantly realised that it is difficult to keep the central idea in mind. The sailing episode would have made by itself a fine short story of adventure, but all Mr. Hopkinson's sententious and

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perfectly sensible explanations and analyses of its effect on Sinbad do not succeed in making a unity out of his book.

Over the Mountain suffers from a division of style and purpose not unlike that which is to be found in *The Man Below*. It is a sort of allegory: the story of a young man named Michael, son of a clergyman, who lives in a village at the foot of the Pale Peak (which has never yet been climbed) and longs to conquer the summit and discover what is on the other side. The adventurous part of the book comes this time at the beginning; Mr. Todd's account of the climb is really exciting, in spite of a tendency to rely too much on the nightmares and fantasies of the exhausted climber. No doubt mountaineers in the last stages of fatigue and cold do live in a world almost completely phantasmagoric: the novelist's difficulty is, having invented a probable sequence of phantasmagoria, to make it interesting to the reader. But Mr. Todd's invention generally serves him well, and there is a grisly moment when Michael, by now slightly mad and dreaming of an encounter with a previous climber who had never returned from the attempt, awakes from his torpor to find that he is indeed holding on to the arm of the climber, "a perfectly preserved corpse stiff and cold as a marble statue." When Michael has descended the other side of the Peak, the interest, for me, dropped rapidly. The unknown land is discovered to be a parody of his own country (in fact, a parody of contemporary Europe), with caricatured inhabitants: sheep-like priests, ruthless, reactionary rulers and police, chosen from the ranks of mentally deficient children, satisfied with the reward of pennies and sweets and the joy of being allowed to let their guns off from time to time. When Colonel Roscoe (= Goering) gives two of them a penny apiece they thank him thus:

> "Oo-ee, we'll be able to buy aniseed balls and sherbet suckers. You *are* kind, dear, lovely Colonel Roscoe . . . Oo-ee, how nice, how kind of pet, sweet Colonel Roscoe."

From this sample it may be inferred that the political satire, though aimed at objects which badly need it, is of the order which relies for its effect on the simplest exaggerations, like those high-brow romps which on Sunday evenings put the dictators through it with a smile and a song.

DESMOND SHAWE-TAYLOR

L'IMPÉRATRICE

Eugénie: Empress of the French. By OCTAVE AUBRY. *Cobden-Sanderson.* 16*s.*

I wonder why M. Aubry's book is not more satisfying. It's very easy to read. Good stories and dramatic situations abound, and no one can say the Empress is a poor subject. Yet the whole effect is a little flat.

Well, first of all, he was much better in French. And then he provides nothing to hold on to; he seldom quotes, and so we don't know where we are, or when to be convinced. (The statement that "every line can be verified by a reference" is not good enough.) Finally, his book is all on the same tone; he has "tried not so much to depict as to narrate," and the result is a prolonged series of brevities, in which nothing has more significance than anything else. Even the Empress is flattened out. The author means well by her, and presents her, on the whole, from her point of view—but with a certain lack of animation.

That seems to me the wrong way. There are two reactions to Eugénie; you may think her unapproachably sublime, or inimitably exasperating. Much can be said for both, and any likeness of her should supply grounds for both.

It all turns on what you feel about heroines. The Empress was heroic through and through, a Chimène who saw the world as her stage. She never tired of contemplating her sublime character, her chivalrous ideas, and her tragic fate. It was the dream of her life to stand against fearful odds, and die unflinching to the last, or else ride to victory on a transport of admiration.

And she really was as brave and high-minded as she thought she was; only, knowing herself to be always right and sublime, she was also very interfering, and more than a little of a bully. Not in cold blood. She said again and again that she "hated politics"; quite often she would add, "I never discuss the affairs of the present day," and would give a perfect show of discretion for a whole evening. And then someone took a line that annoyed her, and she threw reserve to the winds and started to shout him down. It was the same with her married life. She wished to defer, and her manners to the Emperor were more correct than they need have been. In public she never called him *tu*, or used his Christian name, whereas Napoleon addressed her as *tu* and "Ugénie" before all the world; and when he entered her rooms, even if they were alone, she got up and went to meet him. This sort of thing helped to remind her that he was a sovereign—and, after all, she had married him for that. But that was different from allowing him to manage his own affairs. In hours of stress, she simply couldn't help behaving like Mrs. Proudie.

It was not entirely her fault. The role of consort gave her absolutely nothing to do, and she was bursting with life and energy; she had to interfere or go off her head. And besides, the fate which had raised her to a throne had surely never meant her to be a cipher.

The surprising thing is how little she achieved for all her fury of will. At every fatal moment she was on the wrong side, but things might easily have gone the same way if she had never existed. Even the American venture was something Napoleon had had in his mind for years. The war with Prussia was no more her fault than other people's. When it began to go wrong, she "answered for Paris," ordered her husband to keep away, and launched him on the fatal journey to Sedan; but the 4 *septembre* would doubtless have happened in any case. Finally, she helped her son to go to Zululand—but then she could not have stopped him.

Reality had a way of letting her down. The fate of which she was always talking gave her two sublime moments; both times she responded magnificently, and—somehow or other—just failed to reach her ideal. The first was the revolution. She meant to die at her post, and while the mob surged round the Tuileries she was still exclaiming: "I shall not budge." Five minutes later she ran away to her American dentist. There was nothing else to do; but the anticlimax, after weeks of heroic effort, shook her nerves badly and demoralised her for years to come. Day after day, she harped on her wrongs and relieved herself by torrents of noble indignation. M. Aubry gives no idea how trying she was at this time.

When her son was killed, she wanted to die of grief. "Ou bien la douleur m'usera ou je l'userai, dans le premier cas j'irai le le rejoindre, dans le second cela prouvera que je ne vaux pas grand'chose." Within three months of the news, her friends could see that she was recovering. She survived nearly half a century, a vigorous globe-trotter with an unexhausted passion for life.

This astounding vitality may have owed something to the fact that she never had the wear and tear of growing up. Her soul was and remained that of a romantic schoolgirl. She admired warriors, and men of action, and blue blood, and *anciens régimes*, and the Habsburgs, and the Pope, and the Tsar of Russia. She believed in presentiments and omens and lucky charms, and all kinds of magic—and went on believing in them, long after they had been proved not to work. She dreamed of cave-men and desperate passions—"The beasts understand love, and perhaps primitive man understood it, but the men of to-day!" These passions, however, were to be all on the other side; men were to sigh for her and die for her, while she looked down from her pedestal with approving pity. All her senses were undeveloped. She was a cold but faithful wife, she had no feeling for the arts, and she didn't know meat was high unless she was told.

Obviously, her beauty and fascination were transcendent. She was a charmer in the grand style.

K. JOHN

FLASHING FACETS

Let Dons Delight. By RONALD KNOX. *Sheed and Ward.* 7*s.* 6*d.* net.

Every week half a dozen or so books are called "brilliant." The adjective has lost its meaning for me except in describing the flashing facets of a diamond. But this time one may well compare Monsignor Knox's book with a diamond: it has many facets and they all flash. As diamonds go, I would say it is the Koh-i-noor, very brilliant.

The jewel as a whole, that is to say the scheme which occurred to Monsignor Knox for writing about Oxford is shapely. He invents a college, Simon Magus, and he records conversations of the members of its Common Room in 1588, 1638, 1688, 1738, 1788, 1838, 1888, 1938. He seems to have sunk himself into each period whose conversation he records, and at the end of each conversation he gives the lives of some of the members of Common Room, from contemporary sources.

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and perfect bit of craftsmanship, quite why it was ever made. Is it a new way of writing history? Roman Catholic propaganda? an essay in English styles? a commentary on social life? Whichever it is intended to be, it will delight those who have been to Oxford.

Having regard to Monsignor Knox's ecclesiastical eminence and to the publishers, the first facet to be examined is that of Roman Catholic propaganda. This is subtly done. A few decent men appear in the earliest conversation. We are not surprised to learn that they cannot reconcile themselves to the Reformed Religion and leave the bell-swarméd security of Simon Magus for the perilous life of a Catholic priest. Indeed Mr. Lee, whose conversation we enjoyed in 1588, is martyred at Tyburn. Laudian divines put up a feeble defence of the Church of England as the Holy Catholic Church in England. The author makes one of his later characters describe the Laudian clergy as dull men who were gay against their wills. This, I feel sure, was not the point of view of the Ronald Knox who wrote the *Anglican's Alphabet*, and other witty Anglo-Catholic pamphlets. To men of no faith, the wrangling over theological points which occurs in most of the conversations will be merely puzzling, though they will not fail to notice the increasing repulsiveness of the dons, as the twentieth century approaches and materialism grows.

Those who are not interested in theology will not listen to the argument, being lost instead in the liveliness of the conversation written without any self-conscious archaism. There is this description of the man who insists on his own interpretation of the Bible in 1638: "what is this private light of yours but a very Friar's lantern, jumping hither and thither": or Mr. Lilly's description in the same year of his meeting with the Scholar Gipsy at Bablockhythe: or the wit of the eighteenth-century, two-bottle don who says, "Sir, this Mr. Herschel was bred in Hanover, and played the hautboy for the Guards indifferently well. It is but lately that he begun discovering stars, and dedicating them to important persons, in the hope that he would get patronage from it. I do not doubt but he has much over-counted them."

And those who do not believe or enjoy such conversation of dons, should buy the book if only for the parodies it contains, particularly those of Boswell:

> BOSWELL. Then he was doubly a renegado, both when he embraced the Roman Catholic religion, and when he abandoned it. JOHNSON. No, Sir, a man must follow his conscience. If he was sincere when he embraced that way of thinking, he did no wrong then; if insincere, he did no wrong when he abandoned it; you must not make him out to be doubly a scoundrel. But he was a scoundrel for all that.
>
> I asked, whether any credit should be given to the stories we hear of the sea-serpent . . . etc., etc.

and Harold Nicolson:

> I sat in a very remote corner behind a pile of cigarette-stubs, banana skins, and lumps of skim that had been removed from coffee-cups, heaped together on the kind of table which apologises for its existence by protesting that it is only occasional. I watched Leadbetter.

In all this skill of pastiche, Monsignor Knox has not forgotten to draw the characters of his dons in each half-century, generally by what he makes them say. Provosts are always wrong and sweeping. The 1588 Provost: "You will not teach the potato to grow in Ireland; it is very marshy and boggy soil there." The 1738 Provost: "Newton, Sir, was a very mean chronologer. . . . He has his monument in the Abbey, but it is a poor thing. I am not persuaded that posterity will make much of Newton." The 1838 Provost: "Who, Newman? No; he is a man that is always changing, and will never nail his colours. He might perhaps become a Unitarian, as Blanco White has; he is very apt to push things to extremes." The nineteenth and present century dons emerge as particularly clearly defined characters; intolerably reasonable in the 'eighties, intolerably arrogant to-day.

Monsignor Knox is learned, never obvious, never long-winded and only once or twice, in incredibly difficult pastiche, does he make a mistake. The diamond is almost flawless and all its facets flash, though I think that readers may be too dazzled by one to see the other.

JOHN BETJEMAN

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Pursuit of Happiness. THE STORY OF AMERICAN DEMOCRACY. By HERBERT AGAR. *Eyre and Spottiswoode.* 15s.

Mr. Agar has written a book of real distinction. The only bad thing about it is its title and subtitle. There is little or nothing in it about the pursuit of happiness; it tells the story, not of American democracy, but of American plutocracy which has persistently defeated every attempt to make American democracy a reality. It is an extremely interesting and valuable book. Mr. Agar is more interested in truth than in his own beliefs; his mind is therefore singularly immune to the deadly infection of contemporary ideologies. He writes well; he knows the history of America, he has the instinct which enables a man to spot the chief determining things, persons, ideas or events in history. The things which he deals with are the things which were really important when they happened and which are therefore of importance to us to-day. He has written a book which should make the most stupid man think and the aloofest angel weep.

He begins with Jefferson and Hamilton. He shows that Jefferson was the real father of American democracy. Jefferson understood the meaning and implications of democracy. He saw it as a form of society to be aimed at with its own peculiar standards of social value and therefore its own peculiar structure. The standards affirm the social value of freedom, equality, and consent over that of privilege and authority. Hence Jefferson's slogan: "Equal rights for all, special privileges for none," and his insistence that the democratic leader must identify himself with the people. The great value of Mr. Agar's book is that it reveals the crucial relation of this political and social ideal to the economic structure of society both in Jefferson's time and throughout the history of the United States. The problem of economic justice and equality confronted Jefferson as soon as he attempted to translate the ideals of democracy into actuality. He was fully aware of it. His struggle with Hamilton and the Federalists was mainly over the economic structure of American society. Hamilton's system was authoritarian and the authority of the upper classes was maintained through the centralisation of economic power and of administration. Jefferson saw that this centralisation of economic power must destroy equality of rights.

Jefferson during his Presidency failed conspicuously to establish the democracy he aimed at, because he failed to cut the economic claws of capitalism. In fact he left the centralised power of the financiers and capitalists far stronger than he had found them. He was defeated, Mr. Agar holds, by war and by the sacrifice which he was prepared to make to keep the nation out of war—an

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unsuccessful sacrifice at that, the embargo. The rest of Mr. Agar's book is for a democrat a depressing story, for it tells of the continual defeat of democracy by plutocracy. Yet Mr. Agar himself is not without hope. He maintains that democracy has never entirely died out of the United States, that at intervals whenever the Democratic Party has returned to the original ideas and ideals of Jefferson—as, for instance, with Jackson and Bryan—there has always been an answering movement in the people. Though each time the movement was defeated, he does not think that defeat was inevitable and he still believes that it would be possible to establish Jeffersonian democracy in America. But the sands are running out.

LEONARD WOOLF

VICTOR HUGO

The Tragic Life of Victor Hugo. By LÉON DAUDET. Translated by JAMES WHITALL. *Heinemann.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

Victor Hugo's was an "heroic" personality, in the original or mythological sense of that much misused adjective. For the Heroes were children of gods, begotten upon earthly maidens. No doubt, they were all a little larger than life-size: and it is possible that to their many glorious and generous attributes they may have added a certain strain of crassness and clumsiness—the result of being neither quite human nor wholly divine. One feels that they often overdid their heroic mission, that their friendship was sometimes a trifle embarrassing and that there were moments when every demi-god was a downright bore. Self-conscious or morbidly self-critical one is sure they can never have been; and, if one were asked to pick out in Hugo's character a trait that specially distinguished him from his fellow-mortals, one would select his humourless self-absorption, that complete devotion to the idea of his own genius which hurried him through a long life as on the wings of a whirlwind. Other and weaker personages might be fearful of ridicule. Hugo's gestures were always grandiose to the point of extravagance—now and then, to the verge of megalomania; and there is an anecdote which relates how, during early middle age, he was once surrounded by a circle of admiring young men, each concerned to pay him an appropriate tribute. Said the first: it seemed altogether wrong that the master should live in a street that did not bear his name. To which the second retorted that a mere street was not large enough to serve as the receptacle of Victor Hugo's glory: he should lend his name to the quarter in which he dwelt. By no means, cried a breathless third: to the entire city!—Paris (he declared) should be renamed Hugopolis: whereupon Hugo, who had listened in silence, gave an Olympian nod. Murmuring: "*ça viendra, jeune homme, ça viendra,*" he appeared to indicate that the question might be taken as settled.

From an age that grows increasingly suspicious of romantic rodomontade (now that the dangers of that type of megalomania have been revealed in the sphere of direct political action) Victor Hugo could not hope for very sympathetic treatment; but his latest biography is a disconcerting, and even shocking, work. M. Léon Daudet is the great romantic's grandson. Moreover, he is himself an excitable, grandiloquent, quixotic character; and one is surprised that his attitude should be so censorious. It is equally surprising that his method should be so vulgar. *The Tragic Life of Victor Hugo* must command some attention since M. Daudet had had exceptional opportunities; but the use he has made of them is exceptionally poor. No attempt at impartiality or dispassionate statement. M. Daudet's book is half biography, half popular novel; and the narrative, excellently translated, opens (under the heading, *A Stormy Friendship*) with a picture of a painful interview between the poet and his wife:

> "I wonder what he wants of me," thought Adèle, whose conscience was not clear. "Am I to be lectured again?"
>
> She was in her prime: dark-haired, with lovely shoulders, masculine features, deep-bosomed, and a serious, determined expression in her eyes. . . .

Adèle Hugo, of course, has come to love Sainte-Beuve—"ugly—really ugly," short-legged and prematurely bald, with "the face of a malevolent priest" and "an ill-natured and greedy disposition," whereas her husband's features are "proudly beautiful" and he has "deep blue eyes, a high forehead, wavy brown hair." After a time, Hugo discovers her infidelity: and Chapter Two, *Juliette, My Juliette*, describes the sequel. He accepts the passionate, protective embraces of Mademoiselle Drouet—somewhat shop-soiled *demi-mondaine* and minor actress—and begins a *liaison* which lasts for the better part of fifty years.

In his treatment of this episode (which seems to reflect considerable credit on both parties: it was a profound and serious passion on either side) M. Daudet is as detailed as he is disapproving. He is much taken up with the poet's sexual adventures—from his middle-aged successes in the Parisian *demi-monde* to his elderly gallivantings after housemaids and cooks and tradesmen's wives—but over each salacious episode he shakes his head. The central problem of the poet's genius he rarely approaches. Hugo's existence (we are led to understand) was tragic because he never received the blessings of faith and failed to arrive at a comprehension of the Catholic mystery. Readers less *bien pensant* than the present biographer may look elsewhere for an explanation of Hugo's personality and will be more inclined to agree with Mallarmé and Rimbaud. To the author of *Bateau Ivre*, Hugo was a "colossal vulgarian," epitomising all that was worst, weakest and most inflated in contemporary French literature; yet so prodigious was his vulgarity that it commanded respect. Mallarmé's response was very different. Having visited the Master and sat at his feet, he observed, in his quiet, penetrating way, that, although Hugo threw off radiations of genius, glory, power, he appeared to lack a "little interior flame" which he, Mallarmé, thought he possessed and would like to give him. He was a colossus, magnificently organised, and yet somehow incomplete: a vast and imposing effigy, with a void at the centre.

Hugo's tragedy, in short, would seem to have been the tragedy of not a few of the greatest and most celebrated nineteenth-century writers. Through the composition of their genius ran a subtle flaw; underlying prodigious energy and splendid accomplishments was a strange emptiness, a vacuum that could never be filled and echoed hollowly to the thunder of their declamations; at which they roused themselves and declaimed with redoubled gusto. The spectacle they afford is still impressive; their triumphs, failures, passions were on the heroic scale, boldly undertaken, shamelessly advertised and deeply felt; but, with all their introspection, they were curiously innocent of real self-knowledge. Victor Hugo is one of the chief exemplars of the romantic spirit: his life and his achievement deserve careful analysis. M. Daudet's book is as unilluminating as it is ill-disposed.

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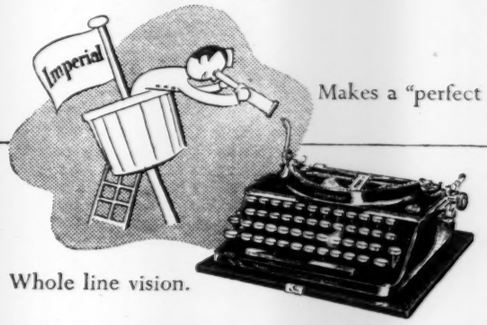

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I Knock at the Door. By SEAN O'CASEY. *Macmillan.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

My Double and I. By NICOLAI GUBSKY. *Heinemann.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

There are two Sean O'Caseys. The one has written plays about "the troubles" that seem to spring as naturally from Dublin as a Burns lyric from the Scotch countryside; the other is an uprooted literary man, consciously experimenting, seeking universal truths in the theatre, and failing finally from lack of talent. Genius does not necessarily include talent (the capability of development), and the writer who possesses the first without the second can only struggle desperately. Give him the right soil, the time and the place, and he will flower, as Mr. O'Casey did in *Juno and the Paycock* and *The Shadow of a Gunman*; but it may be years before circumstance will favour him again. Meanwhile how is he to live? He must make do with such talent as he has, helped out by gusts of stronger impulse; his work is likely to be uncertain and directionless as a result. I have felt this with all Mr. O'Casey has written since *The Plough and the Stars*. There were moments of imagination in *Within the Gates*, but on the whole the poetry on which it took its stand was sentimental and artificial. It was cardboard drama. Only by a return to Irish themes, I remember thinking at the time, could Mr. O'Casey renew contact with his sources.

In *I Knock at the Door* he has attempted to do this, for the book gives a picture of his childhood in Dublin up to the age of twelve. But he has done it in his double character; on one page it is the man of genius, on the next the fumbling man of talent. There is not perhaps enough in one's earliest memories to fill a book of a hundred, let alone three hundred, pages; and it is easy to see where the lesser O'Casey has stepped in to pad out memory. The Joycean daydreams and jingle prose in which sections of the book are wrapped seem to me on an altogether lower level than the narrative, which is quick, vivid and beautifully easy. True the rather hazy reverie has its point: as a child O'Casey went half-blind from under-nourishment, and his nights were delirious with pain. When the rest of the school trotted off to Phoenix Park for the review on the Queen's birthday, the little invalid had to lie in bed and dream of buckskin breeches, medals and artillery.

All through the book the mirage of Dublin rises above the cramped squalor of a particular childhood. On market days the cattle streamed in hundreds from the North Circular Road down to the quay, to be shipped to England; the Castle Ball would fill Dublin for an evening with landaus and cabs bearing notabilities; there were always the trams swinging into Sackville Street, "the widest street in the world." Partly no doubt because of his illness and bad eyesight, Johnny (Mr. O'Casey writes in the third person) found these tram-journeys through fabulous streets more wonderful even than most children do. One of the most vivid scenes in the book describes the excitement on the night of the Queen's birthday, with Trinity College lit up and the students marching out to fight the crowd. The tram conductor who dragged Johnny and his mother on to the platform of his tram addressed the crowd thus:

> A man 'ud want St. Pethrick's crozier to knock a little decency into yous. A nice way the whole of yous musta been reared, with your pushin' and shovin', like a hirde of uncivilised savages that has never seen anything beyond the rim o' their own land! I don't know the hell why Parnell's wastin' his time thryin' to shape yous into somethin' recognisable as men an' women. Honest to Jasus, I'm gettin' ashamed of me life to mention I'm Irish in front of anyone showin' the meanest sign or vestige of dickorum. And all of yous riskin' the breakage of your bodies to see a few twinklin' lights set over our heads to do honour to a famine queen rollin' about in a vis-a-vis at a time the Irish were gettin' shovelled, ten at a time, into deep and desperate graves.

Verbal finery, in the shabbiest of surroundings, is typical of the book, and indeed of Ireland as a whole. If Mr. O'Casey had been content to let his characters speak, instead of giving tongue himself, too, to a stream of consciousness rich with brogue, I believe his book would have been better. Facts and authentic voices count for a lot in autobiography; in no other kind of writing is it more dangerous for the author to "shape" in a literary way. *I Knock at the Door* is remarkable enough to survive its defects. It seems to me far the best thing Mr. O'Casey has done for years.

Mr. Nicolai Gubsky's *My Double and I* is also a small segment of its author's life, but from the other end; he begins about a year ago and leaves off soon after the crisis. He has written a previous volume of autobiography on the same lines, and to judge from the talent and assurance of the present one, he is likely to go on writing others. Recollection plays a comparatively small part in drawing this self-portrait; where the past is referred to, it is for its effect on the future. Mr. Gubsky is a quick liver, a man who lives through events in order to write about them, and writes in order to clear his ideas for living. And ideas he has in plenty! Half the excitement of *My Double and I* springs from its author's experiments in self-detachment; the "double" referred to in the title is the withdrawal he practises, or attempts to practise, in moments of panic or exaltation. He has learnt to become an onlooker on himself, like Dunne's diagrammatic "spectator" in the time scene. In case this sounds cranky or thinly cerebral, let me add that Mr. Gubsky is an active, widely sympathetic, bold, and exuberant man, whose impulsiveness is matched only by his skill in self-dissection. His descriptions of an Atlantic voyage on a British tramp steamer, of Mexico, and of his life as a struggling author in London, are brilliantly perceptive. At the same time he watches himself with skinned eyes; especially in his sentimental adventures where he finds detachment least easy. "Look! we have come through" might have been his title. The love affair with which the book ends is a queer triumph of its author's ideals. No doubt, Mr. Gubsky is too much of an experimenter to suit lazy tastes, but if you have the curiosity to follow an author who gets himself out of the emotional traps most of us remain caught in for ever, his book is a fascinating record. Mr. Gubsky started—so far as I am concerned—with the disadvantage that I opened this second volume of his autobiography without having read the first. He does not waste time explaining himself to new readers. Nevertheless *My Double and I* held me at once, and I shall hurry to get hold of *Angry Dust*, its predecessor, before the next instalment of this strange running confession pops up on the shelf.

G. W. STONIER

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3.P.52

him. Mr. Steegman is often witty about the British in India, but rarely understanding. Rightly he is appalled by the humbug of New Delhi, which sounds like a nightmare of massive stone, and by Simla, which seems to epitomise all the conventions he dislikes. But Mr. Steegman writes less about them than about himself. He cannot see India for the dust and often he cannot see the dust for himself. But towards the end of the book the author doffs the jester's habit, which he wears brilliantly, and adopts the more sober raiment of the pilgrim. In Nepal Mr. Steegman finds something big enough to distract his attention from himself, and his descriptions of the Valley of Kathmandu are magnificent. Good books about India are few, and although this does not rank among the best informed, it deserves to be among the most popular. Mr. Steegman can write well and amusingly. Often he reveals himself in an unsympathetic light, but one cannot but enjoy, and finally admire, this unusual and attractive book.

Studies in Keats. New and Old. By JOHN MIDDLETON MURRY. *Oxford University Press.* 8s. 6d.

This new edition of Mr. John Middleton Murry's *Studies in Keats* contains three new essays. The book, originally published in 1930, was designed to fill the gap which Mr. Murry felt existed in his brilliant study *Keats and Shakespeare*. Two of the new essays are as interesting and detailed as any of the earlier ones. In particular the tracing of Wordsworth's influence on Keats provides the material for an essay which might well have been developed even further. To all admirers of Keats this book should be indispensable. The additional essays reveal the same careful and deep study as the others. It is a pleasure to read such sensitive and accurate criticism at a time when aesthetic considerations are being pushed well into the background.

Week-end Competitions

No. 471

Set by Raymond Mortimer

Four or five years ago I set a competition which brought in a particularly rich harvest. I asked for imaginary Last Words of eminent persons, reminding competitors that the best of such recorded sayings were a touch ironic (consciously or unconsciously) and characteristic of the speaker, often showing the ruling passions strong in death. The usual prizes are now offered for the best suggestions of Last Words for any three of the following characters: Cassandra, Nero, Julian the Apostate, Savonarola, Benvenuto Cellini, Shakespeare, Donne, Madame de Maintenon, Casanova, Mozart, Lady Byron, Gladstone, Sir Arthur Sullivan, Bradlaugh, Rimbaud, Sarah Bernhardt, Edison, Horst Wessel, D'Annunzio, Amanda Ros, A. E. Housman, Picasso, Charlie Chaplin, Stalin.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Friday, March 17th.
2. Competitors may use a pseudonym. Typescript is not insisted on, but writing must be on one side of the paper only.
3. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.
4. No competitor is eligible for more than one prize in any one week.

The result of last week's competition will be announced in our next issue.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 469

Set by G. W. Stonier

We offer the usual prizes (Two Guineas and Half a Guinea) for the best Alphabet of Bad Manners.

Report by G. W. Stonier

My sympathies are with the competitor who wrote: "My Aunt Heliotrope started this competition enthusiastically with 'A is for Ash that's dropped on the carpet.' Several minutes later, after long thought, she exploded with two words that are unprintable and said she didn't give a Damn what anybody made up for E to Z." Nevertheless, a large number of people finished their alphabets with ease and apparent enjoyment; and though not so many succeeded in being entertaining for the whole stretch, there were good items. The fault to guard against was a titupping metre (if you chose verse), which tended to gather in all the commonplaces of bad manners, including noisy eating, road-hogging, being late for dinner, retelling old jokes, etc.; and there should have been a special caution against putting down "The Man who eats peas with his knife." Instead of that text-book figure we might have had, say, the gentleman who takes off his glove to pick his nose or the enthusiast at a concert who hisses at others who cough. And what about the lady, polite herself, who encourages bad manners in her dog? For some reason she was let off lightly. I should like, too, to have seen an alphabet of purely English bad manners; nowhere, for example, except in English country hotels do you meet the man who sings for hours in the bathroom, and then trots down to breakfast timidly mute. Here and there competitors enlivened their lists with a true touch of the horrific. "Senex Ipse" suggested: "Belching before breakfast," "Drinking other people's pints" and "Yachting off Jarrow." "L. M. J." provided some good exhortations:

Leave with a bang
Mutter
Neigh when you laugh
"Oke" your orders
Pounce on the cat.

"X for Xmas" was much the best for that difficult letter. Z did not seem to trouble particularly, though variants of Zoo and Zeal proved better than Zany. More fanciful were "Zoom over the garden of your grandparents when they are having a croquet party" (Miss Diana Moore), and "Drinking one's bath-water" (Miss M. Chisholm). On the whole the prose entries were more subtle than the verse. Miss Barbara Fletcher's alphabet included the following:

Accepting a present only to return a bigger one, and so precipitately as to show that the first was regarded as an impertinence.
Being sorry for people who are not sorry for themselves. . . .
Keeping borrowed books.
Looking incredulous.

Among those who preferred verse Miss P. Jones and R. S. Jaffray, though a good way below Belloc and Betjeman, were in the running for a prize.

F is the friend with incipient flu
Who shuts all the windows and gives it to you. . . .
J is the joke that the judge will oft crack
On the one in the dock where he can't answer back. . . .

But others of his couplets miss hitting nails. To Allan M. Laing, the most consistently amusing, I recommend that the first prize be given, and the second to Mita Bord, who gets there by a trick (address please).

FIRST PRIZE

A is an Aggressively haughty Attitude, not even remotely related to a beatitude.
B is a Back-slapper, out of a novel by "Sapper."
C is the Cut. Not quite the thing. Anything but!
D stands for the Dirty Dog, who is seriously obscene in a smoke-fog.
E might as well be Excesses—drink, you know, or, in a poet, too many S's.
F? O, just Fingering things that are someone else's belongings.
G is, of course, the Grin that one wants to stick a pin in.
H is the Hustle Habit: you don't say: "After you, Madam": you just grab it.
I is certainly for Interrupter, than whom possibly there is no one corrupter.
J stands for Jilt, which implies not merely bad manners, but positive guilt.
K is the facetious Kidder, whose wife (I hope you agree) ought as soon as possible to be a widder.
L is a Little Lout: an inevitable gate-crasher: you simply can't leave him out.
M is for Marginalia, written in your books by borrowers: words fail ye!
N is for Nagging, the only answer to which is sandbagging.
O is dedicated to Ogle, which isn't nice, whether the object be a typist or a hello-girl.
P is for Peas, eaten with a knife: this is bad form, as well as what a Cockney would describe as "unsife."
Q is simply that Queue where I take the opportunity of squeezing in front of you.
R is for Rudeness, which may or may not take the form of lewdness.
S is undoubtedly the Sneer, an expression no really sound moralist dare cheer.
T is to Trump your partner's Tricks and be dropped on, very properly, like a ton of bricks.
U is for "Undergrads," an abbreviation which naturally annoys the lads.
V is for Vandal, whose conduct was (and is) generally regarded as a scandal.
W's for Wink, the high-sign of a low gink.
X stands for Xenophobe, a shockingly unsocial citizen of the globe.
Y strikes me as the sort of Yawn which resembles the tooting of a hunting horn.
Z can only be "ZZZZZZZ"—the sound which causes passengers pain when whistled through the teeth in a railway train.

ALLAN M. LAING

SECOND PRIZE

To be found with the wrong girl, especially in bed,
Is the whole of Bad Manners—from A unto Z.

MITA BORD

Company Meeting

LONDON BRICK COMPANY

RECORD PRODUCTION

BOARD'S POLICY OF NATIONAL DISTRIBUTION

THE Annual General Meeting of the London Brick Company, Limited, was held on March 7th at the Connaught Rooms, Great Queen Street, London, W.C.

Sir P. Malcolm Stewart, Bt., O.B.E., LL.D., D.L., J.P. (Chairman of the company), who presided, said: On turning to the credit side of the balance sheet you will observe that the fixed assets now stand at £2,100,000. I wish particularly to draw your attention to this figure of £2,100,000; it shows a reduction of £60,000 on that of the previous year and brings us back to the very low revaluation of 1936 for the aggregate of our fixed assets. Freehold land was then valued at £200,000; to-day it stands at £214,277 with additions in respect of purchases since May, which brings the total freehold land held up to 10,000 acres, of which over 8,400 are clay reserves. You will doubtless recollect that when we wrote down our works, etc., assets to £1,750,000, this represented a basic valuation of only £1 per thousand of annual productive capacity of 1,750,000,000 bricks.

ADVANTAGE OF CONSERVATIVE FINANCE

There may in all probability be some stockholders who do not fully realise the advantages that are now being reaped and will further be realised in the future in consequence of the heavy writing down of our works and other assets effected in 1936. I will explain; were we to make no additions and write off £150,000 depreciation, we should be writing off 150,000,000 of productive capacity, since every £1 thus provided writes off the plant required to produce 1,000 bricks.

It will be readily appreciated that the effectiveness of present and future depreciation is much enhanced because of the exceptionally low figures to which our fixed assets have already been written down. Thus from past prosperity have we provided for possible future adversity, a policy designed to give increased stability and security which can but prove advantageous to all interested in our undertaking in whatever capacity.

Turning to the profit and loss account you will see that the profit from trading amounts to £566,575, an increase over that of the previous year of £3,098.

Interest and income from investments at £20,337 are lower by £5,503. The total revenue of the company at £587,130 is down by £2,524. The sum of £150,000 has again been set aside for depreciation and utilised in writing down the works assets. After providing for the dividend on the 8 per cent. preference stock, the profits earned enable the directors to recommend a final dividend on the ordinary stock of 5 per cent., less tax, making 20 per cent. for the year. The sum of £2,000 remains to be added to the carry forward, which will then stand at £82,000.

You will not be surprised to learn that our costs of production increased during the year, the higher prices of fuel and all materials for maintenance being mainly responsible for this. To combat this we are making a determined effort to economise through procuring increased efficiency, and have already effected a certain degree of reorganisation.

ACHIEVEMENT OF NATIONAL DISTRIBUTION

With regard to the sales side of the business, it must be realised that the past year was influenced by two major factors operating in opposed directions on our turnover. We reaped the advantage of the fine weather experienced in the Spring of last year, but were hit by the critical events of September. The year was entered with the full knowledge that we must further pursue our established policy of national distribution which has benefited not only the company but the building industry by making available in any part of the country materials of a standard quality at a fair price. This we have succeeded in doing on an economic basis, and last year there was no county in England and Wales in which Phorpres bricks were not sold. Our consistent policy of selling at what is for us a fair economic price has helped to stimulate building and brought its own reward.

This expansion of our trade has naturally met with some opposition, particularly from those with strong local ties and influence, but once our product is established, it is appreciated, not only by the architect and the builder for its technical qualities, but also by the bricklayer, who benefits from the ease of handling due to its uniformity and light weight.

You are probably asking yourselves, what do I think of our prospects for the current year? I am going to tell you quite frankly that whereas last year we increased our production and deliveries, a repetition of this is not yet assured. You must not think I fear we are in for a bad year, because this is not the case.

We have made a poor start, but I am glad to inform you trade has recently been steadily picking up, and I am confident not only of further improvement but that we shall make a fair showing.

The report was unanimously adopted.

OUTSTANDING STRENGTH

ASSETS 128 MILLION POUNDS

Extracts from the 86th Annual Report to be presented to the Shareholders at the Annual General Meeting at Halifax on Monday, March 27th, 1939.

MORTGAGES

ADVANCED ON NEW MORTGAGES £20,340,996

TOTAL SUM DUE UPON MORTGAGES £105,177,549

Showing an increase of £6,900,650 during the year.

LIQUID ASSETS

Trustee Securities together with Cash at Banks and Cash in Hand amount to £22,368,340

SHARE & DEPOSIT FUNDS

Increased by £5,194,611 during year £122,284,430

TOTAL ASSETS

Increased by £5,616,848 during year £128,242,856

ACCOUNTS

Increased by 22,682 during year. Total now 735,096

PROFITS & RESERVES

The balance of profit for the year after making provision for all management expenses, Income Tax, National Defence Contribution, and Interest due to Depositors up to the date of the accounts and for depreciation amounted to £3,222,614. Appropriations have been made to Investing Shareholders of interest and bonus £2,772,691; Staff Superannuation Fund £50,000 and to General Reserve £400,000.

TOTAL RESERVE FUNDS AND UNDIVIDED PROFIT £5,466,090

Copy of Balance Sheet free on application

GENERAL MANAGERS:
DAVID W. SMITH, F.C.I.S. F. E. WARBRECK HOWELL, LL.D.

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CALIBAN'S PROBLEM CONTEST

PROBLEM 323.—ALICE'S PARTY

(For the Lower Fourth.)

"D'you know what I dreamt about last night?" asked Alice.

"Me," said the Mock-Turtle.

"Manganese," said the Caterpillar.

"Mousetraps," said the March Hare.

"No," said Alice. "You're all wrong. I dreamt that I was a little girl again, and giving one of my card parties."

"Tell us about it," said the Mock-Turtle. "Better to get it over."

"Well," said Alice, "I used to have a circular table, and I'd invite the sixteen court cards to dinner. I used to seat them in various ways round the table, but certain rules always had to be observed. No two cards of the same suit could sit next to one another; nor could two Aces sit together, nor two Kings, two Queens, or two Knaves."

"There was still plenty of scope for you," said the March Hare. He took out a notebook and began making calculations.

"Last night I dreamt," said Alice, "that the King of Hearts sat between two Knaves. The Ace of Hearts was opposite the Ace of Diamonds, and the Knave of Diamonds was opposite the Knave of Clubs. The Queen of Diamonds was two places to the King of Clubs' left, and she had an Ace on either side of her. Three places from the King of Clubs sat the King of Diamonds, and, opposite the King of Clubs, the King of Spades. The Queen of Spades was opposite the Knave of Hearts, and the Knave of Spades was opposite the Queen of Diamonds."

"And I suppose," said the March Hare, "we have to find out now how everyone was seated?"

"That's right," said Alice.

"Can't be done," said the Caterpillar.

"Can't be done?"

"Too many possibilities."

"Then I'll give you another what-is-it," said Alice.

"Datum," snapped the Caterpillar.

"That's right," said Alice. "Another datum. One of the Queens sat two places from the Knave of Clubs."

Draw a plan of the table.

PROBLEM 322.—OF THE MAKING OF BOOKS

Owing to an error in transcription, the odds in Kisse-Cannon's game with Hazard appeared as 2 to 1 on Hazard instead of 2 to 1 on Kisse-Cannon. Some solvers have assumed that the odds are as stated, others have assumed the odds intended. Either solution (if correct) will rank for points.

PROBLEM 321.—THE RUGGER TOUR

Solution by Robert Beveridge.

The odds against Stinker winning the toss in more than half of his matches are a shade longer than 3 to 2 against. This may be otherwise expressed by saying that the probability of his winning the toss in more than half of his matches is slightly less than .4.

If the tour comprises an odd number of matches, the probability of his so winning the toss is obviously .5. The tour must therefore comprise an even number of matches.

If the tour comprises	2	matches, the probability is			1/4	= .2500
,,	,,	4	,,	,,	5/16	= .3125
,,	,,	6	,,	,,	22/64	= .3438
,,	,,	8	,,	,,	93/256	= .3633
,,	,,	10	,,	,,	386/1024	= .3770
,,	,,	12	,,	,,	1586/4096	= .3872
,,	,,	14	,,	,,	6476/16384	= .3953
,,	,,	16	,,	,,	26333/65536	= .4018

Stinker proposed to play 14 matches.

* A number of solvers show how these probabilities are arrived at, but their algebraic formulae do not lend themselves well to reproduction.

PROBLEM 319.—THE ODDFELLOWS' BALL

A set of Low's cartoons goes to David Dempster, 36 Goddard Avenue, Swindon.

Eight points are awarded.

The above eight points will only go to solvers who analysed the problem along the lines of the published solution. Solvers whose analyses are partially accurate will receive four points.

PROBLEM 320.—HIS OWN INVENTION

A set of Low's cartoons goes to R. Roscoe, Henderson Hall, Newcastle-on-Tyne, 7.

Six points are awarded.

TO SOLVERS.

1. Many solvers send in claims for prizes one week and write the next week to say that their prizes have not been received. Will they please note that delay is sometimes inevitable, as I do not live at the NEW STATESMAN AND NATION offices, and intercommunication between us may take a little time?

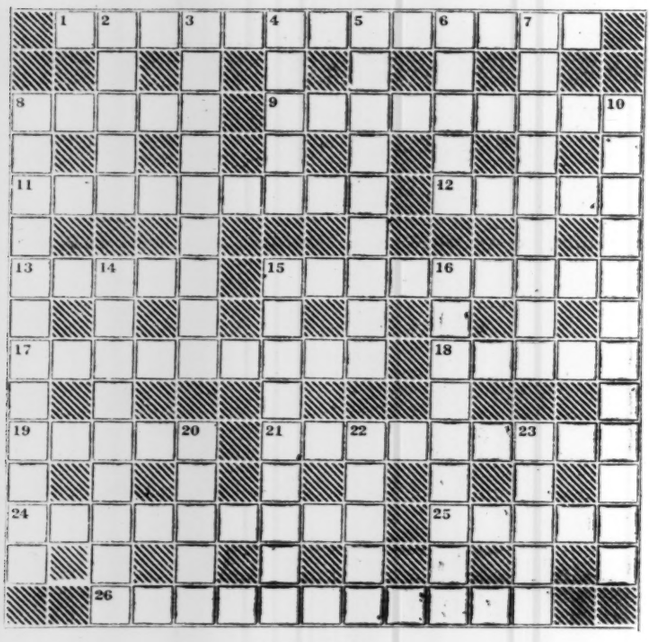
2. Many solvers still send me their solutions on one sheet and their names and addresses in a covering letter. I appreciate their courtesy, but it would simplify work for me if names and addresses were always written at the head of the solution.

CALIBAN

[U.S.A. Competitors. The Editor regrets that the prizes offered in our Week-end Competitions cannot apply to American competitors.]

WEEK-END CROSSWORD 470

Books to the value of Five Shillings may be chosen by the sender of the first correct solution opened. Post solutions to arrive not later than first delivery Wednesday following the date of issue, addressed to "CROSSWORDS," 10 Great Turnstile, London, W.C.1.



Set by L.-S.

The last week's winner is

M. Enid Andrews, 12 Pownall Road, Hounslow, Middlesex

ACROSS

1. Not a cloth for dry manicure. (13)
8 (rev.). Necessary appliance for forgery. (5)
9. Trying authors? (9)
11. One product of the press gang. (9)
12 (rev.). Saul went to seek them and became a king. (5)
13. Very musical. (5)
15. Feast for the sluggard? (9)
17. Retiring wish we take unconsciously. (9)
18. Should be done to good cars but not to good drivers. (5)
19. What a thief does with a steak. (5)
21. Not change in time but the opposite. (9)
24 (rev.). A nun takes gin with me. (9)
25. You might pull the wool over his eyes if he needed a haircut. (5)
26. Where one got a caning at school? (11)

DOWN

2. The vehicle turned over on top of us when we slipped up. (5)
3. Did he sing "Who's afraid of the Big Bad Wolfe" at Quebec? (9)
4. Reverse of being downright truthful. (5)
5. Financial unbelief? (9)
6. Saint Affirmation. (5)
7. Suburb for sky shine at sunrise. (9)
8. This part of the flight is a bit of a comedown of course. (12)
10. One would not expect to be seated in such an apartment. (12)
14. Saltless, sundried C O D. (9)
15. Between a poor man and a thief. (9)
16. Impels one to provide work for the fire brigade. (9)
20. He playfully demonstrates what every woman knows. (5)
22. The last one isn't played at bridge. (5)
23. It will help you to guess what is hidden. (5)

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD

M	I	T	H	R	I	D	A	T	E	■	K	C	A	H
A	■	O	■	A	■	E	■	A	■	■	■	O	■	E
R	E	S	P	I	R	A	T	O	R	■	A	N	N	A
E	■	H	■	L	■	D	■	B	■	K	■	V	■	D
■	■	■	S	W	E	E	T	W	I	L	L	I	A	M
H	■	B	■	A	■	N	■	O	■	I	■	C	■	A
A	L	L	A	Y	E	D	■	R	E	P	U	T	E	S
R	■	A	■	L	■	■	■	■	S	■	I	■	T	■
D	U	C	K	I	N	G	■	C	A	P	R	O	N	E
H	■	K	■	N	■	A	■	A	■	R	■	N	■	R
E	X	P	R	E	S	S	T	R	A	I	N	■	■	■
A	■	E	■	S	■	B	■	D	■	N	■	Z	■	E
R	U	N	S	■	R	I	D	I	N	G	B	O	O	T
T	■	N	■	■	■	L	■	A	■	E	■	I	■	A
S	T	Y	E	■	E	L	E	C	T	R	I	C	A	L

IN GREY OWL'S MEMORY

"How can any woman wear a trapped fur, knowing that every hair on that skin has vibrated with prolonged torture?" These were Grey Owl's words to me.

Write for WHITE LIST of Fur Crusade and Humane Trapping Campaign, which names Furs you need not be ashamed to wear. Funds needed for more Advts.

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EAST HAM GRANADA

Sunday Afternoon, March 12, 2.15

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CRUISES TO GREEK ISLANDS

April 5—24. MARSEILLES, AGRIGENTO, DELPHI, ATHENS, OLYMPIA, ISTANBUL, LESBOS, KNOSSOS, DELOS, SKYROS, NICOPOLIS.
Aug. 10—29. VENICE, DUBROVNIK, ATHENS, SCIATHOS, THASOS, SAMOTHRACE, MILETUS, DELOS, DELPHI, SUNIUM.
Aug. 25—Sept. 13. VENICE, KOTOR, DODONA, OLYMPIA, MYCENAE, EPIDAURUS, LESBOS, ISTANBUL, DELPHI, CORFU.
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HOUSES, FLATS, etc.—continued

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HOUSES, FLATS, etc.—continued

TWO SERVICE FLATS to let on March quarter day from £104 p.a., overlooking gardens, accommodation includes dressing room with wash hand basin, bathroom, kitchenette, etc. Rent includes comprehensive service, bedmaking, shoe cleaning, window cleaning, central heating, constant hot water, etc., etc. Without extra cost interesting meals can be served in your flat from the Isobar (a club for the epicure of modest means). Further particulars from SECRETARY, Isokon, Lawn Road Flats, N.W.3. Primrose 6054.

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GARDEN studio, gallery, bathroom, kitchenette £90 p.a. Larger one similar with large bedroom sitting room, £130 p.a., newly built Italian garden, porter. "OWNER," Chelsea Studios, 416, Fulham Road.

LARGE, light divan bed-sitting room, newly decorated, gas fire and cooker. Schiedmayer grand piano available if desired. Bath, telephone, garden. Near bus and tube. £1 per week. Apply, 73a, Elsham Road, Kensington, W.14. Park 7978.

THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By DIVES

PREPARING FOR A BOOM?—ELECTRICITY SHARES—FLEET STREET WAR?—BANK FIGURES

THE fall in the unemployment figures this week, not to mention a number of satisfactory industrial reports and dividends, gave further impetus to the buying movement on the Stock Exchange. Every market, except that in newspaper shares, participated in the rise, which was only halted by profit-taking on Wednesday afternoon. Oil shares were especially prominent and Shell Transport and Trading, which I recommended last week, rose to over 4½. It was noticeable that the demand for equity shares spread this week from the stable-dividend to the speculative class, such as shipping and mining shares. The recovery in shipping shares indicates that the belief in a world trade recovery is gaining ground. Major Angas has helped to encourage the prevailing bullishness by publishing another pamphlet called *New Boom Ahead in England* (St. Clements Press, 5*s*.). His thesis rests upon the now familiar monetary argument—that huge Government expenditures out of loans are bound to stimulate trade and increase employment. In his view the Government's borrowing of £350 millions will be effected as to about £200 millions by artificially creating bank money—and without any appreciable rise in the rate of interest. Indeed, to begin with Major Angas expects to see the long-term rate of interest forced down by Bank of England operations. The spending of the loans cannot fail, in his view, to cause an improvement in the public demand for beer, cigarettes, textiles, motor cars, etc., after it has been paid out by the armament companies who first receive it. There may, he admits, be political shocks, but he advises the investor to be bold and buy on the assumption that the trade recession has touched bottom. There is a big gamble in this view, but for the moment I think it is reasonable, on economic and monetary grounds, to be on the side of the "bulls." The rises in share prices have been steep—thanks to the shortage of stock on dealers' books—but I cannot see investors getting so scared again of Herr Hitler and I know plenty who are longing for another political "shock" just to give them the opportunity to buy.

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The rise in electricity supply shares has not been so marked recently as that in industrial shares and the new equity issues by the Yorkshire and County of London companies have perhaps tended to restrain the market. Nevertheless this group should not be overlooked by investors who take a more cautious view of the prospects of a trade recovery. The premium payable for security, which is indicated in the lower yields obtainable on electricity supply shares, is not extravagantly priced, as the following table indicates:

	Low 1939	Present Price	Earned %	Div. %	Gross Yield %
County of London Elect.	41/9	45/6 xd	—	10½	£4 12 3
Clyde Valley	35/–	37/– xd	—	8	4 6 6
Midland Counties ..	34/–	37/3	9.8	8	4 6 0
North Metropolitan ..	41/6	45/6	12.4	10	4 8 0
Yorkshire Elect. ..	34/9	37/–	—	8	4 6 6

My preference goes to Midland Counties. The chairman in his speech to shareholders mentioned that the company's transport subsidiaries, which were now profitable concerns, would this year be put into a separate account. This suggests the possibility of a sale of these separated interests and an eventual bonus to the shareholders. About 2 per cent. of the company's gross earnings are applicable to the transport subsidiaries and, even if they are sold, the dividend of 8 per cent. could be maintained out of the electricity earnings. Midland Counties shares will ultimately yield much more than £4 6*s*. per cent.

* * *

In contrast to the general firm tone, newspaper shares have been a weak market this week on fears of a renewal of the Free Gift War which ravaged Fleet Street's finances between 1931 and 1933. In those years low newsprint prices encouraged the proprietors of the rival "popular" dailies to compete for circulation by enrolling armies of canvassers, who offered new readers increasingly costly bribes of cutlery, crockery, wrist watches, cameras and clothes. At one time the cost of this campaign exceeded £50,000 a week. Eventually a truce was negotiated; the canvassers remained, but gifts were limited by agreement to presentation books, and canvassing expenditure was in consequence reduced to under £20,000 a week. The peace was disturbed a few days ago by Lord Southwood, who presides over the destinies of Odham's Press. *Daily Herald* canvassers moved out to battle on readers' doorsteps armed with a *Complete First Aid Outfit Book and A.R.P.*, described as "the *Daily Herald's* great contribution to home and national service." This remarkable volume, like the domestic utensil designed by Michelangelo for the Pope, was "no ordinary" book. Encased within the binding were bandages, lint, cotton wool, dressings, plaster, safety pins, iodine and ammonia. This free offer of a miniature medicine chest was assailed by the other Press Barons as a breach of the "No Gifts except Books" agreement. As circulation managers reported that demand for the *Herald's* outfit was keen and that readers were being seduced in thousands from their allegiances, plans were hurriedly laid for counter-offensives. Could not cutlery or a battery of sauce bottles be "bound in" with Cookery Manuals, or a set of valves be included in a Handbook on Wireless? Parleys followed. Lord Southwood agreed on Tuesday evening to call off his raid. But it is by no means certain that the "war" has been averted by the *Daily Herald's* capitulation. On Wednesday Lord Beaverbrook's evening newspaper warned investors that "the mischief had been done, the truce broken." A broad hint was given that reparations might be exacted by retaliation. We shall see. But these rumours of a renewal of a senseless and extravagant race to inflate circulations are sufficient to make investors view newspaper shares critically—especially as newsprint prices are more likely to rise than fall over the next twelve months.

* * *

The clearing bank averages for February show how urgent it is that the authorities should neutralise, by increasing the bill issue, the deflationary effects of tax revenue inflow following the Exchange Account's heavy sales of gold. Bill Holdings have dropped by £44 millions to a record "low" for February of £212 millions, and cash and call money is £11 millions down. Hence, though deposits have shrunk by £54 millions, the "liquid asset" ratio has declined from 29 to 27.2 per cent. An increase of nearly £10 millions in advances—an encouraging sign of broadening demand for trade credit—has had to be offset by a £7 million contraction in investment portfolios. If two alternative evils—a tightening of commercial credit facilities, or sales of gilt-edged by the banks—are to be avoided, there will have to be vigorous use of the Treasury bill as a medium for Defence borrowing.

Company Meeting

UNITED KINGDOM PROVIDENT INSTITUTION

1938 NEW RECORDS

MAXIMUM BONUS MAINTAINED

SIR ERNEST BENN ON THE NEWSPAPER MENACE

THE 98th Annual General Meeting of the Members of the United Kingdom Temperance and General Provident Institution was held on Wednesday, the 8th March, 1939, in the Incorporated Accountants Hall, Victoria Embankment, W.C.

The Chairman (Sir Ernest J. P. Benn, Bt.), said :—

My Lords, Ladies and Gentlemen,

In moving the adoption of the 98th Report and Accounts, and attempting a review, as is our custom, of the past year, I have a task which is perhaps more difficult, certainly more interesting, than ever before in my experience. From the general market I have to report a certain amount of depression, a considerable element of anxiety, a lack of confidence, and a failure to progress, out of which it would be easy to produce a superficial tale of woe.

But in my judgment any such tale would be far removed from the real truth, however much it might accord with that deeply cherished grumbling instinct which is one of the qualities of our race.

THE NEWSPAPER MENACE

Commerce and Industry have always suffered the handicap of politics, but in these modern times a serious new barrier to peace and prosperity has arisen in the shape of an enormous expansion of the machinery for the distribution of news. Hour by hour, the rotary press and the wireless have to be fed with more and more news. There remains, however, among all this advance and improvement, the age-old difficulty that good news is no news, and bad news is good news. Thus in the realm of foreign affairs we only hear of the bad in other nations, and they, in their turn, are only informed of the bad, which, strange as it may seem to us, is also to be found or invented here.

Every nation is amply supplied with skilful sensation sleuths, experts in the discovery or invention of scandal and rumour, and the provision of headlines and scares.

The business of news gathering and news distribution, on paper and on the air, must now be ranked with the greatest of our industries. In this country alone it employs more than a hundred millions of capital; there is a daily newspaper circulation of thirty million copies, and there are nearly nine million wireless licences.

To remember that the whole of this impressive structure is absolutely governed by the very human preference for bad news, is to realise one of the difficulties of a peacemaking Prime Minister, and the jeopardy in which quiet and confidence always stand.

The difference or difficulty about which men can disagree, argue, or even fight, is as old as history, but only in recent times has it become the essential raw material of a great and powerful industry. I fear that to preach good will to the news trade, the bad news trade as it must be called, is something like advocating teetotalism to brewers. But a more general understanding of this difficulty is one of the most urgent of present-day needs.

In the absence of cheer, or comfort, or encouragement from the news services, we are only saved from disaster by the good faith and sound common sense of ordinary people, who still find, if not "sermons in stones," at least some "good in everything."

THE STOCK EXCHANGE IN 1938.

Roughly three-fifths of your property is in Stock Exchange Securities, and the shrinkage in values during 1938 was a matter of some concern to us. For some years past, I have pleaded, in your name, for a better interest yield upon our money, and in each of the last four years I have noted with satisfaction a tendency in that direction. 1938 has given us all we hoped for, and has brought Stock Exchange prices into line with the Five per cent. Mentality of which I spoke last year. You must remember that, like all serious investors, we buy for income, and seeing that we have never taken credit for inflated capital values, we are able to remain undisturbed when the inflation disappears. Our economic department has functioned so effectively that the round million of appreciation which we put into a published Reserve remained intact even at the low Stock Exchange levels of December 31st.

I fail to share the feelings of the pessimists, and I think that the story of the Stock Exchange in 1938 gives further proof of our strength and staying power as a nation. We have lost foreign funds chiefly because of returning confidence in France and America. I can find no cause for pessimism in that. I suspect that the withdrawal of foreign money was accelerated by official attempts to stop it, and I regret that, notwithstanding all the lessons of the post-war period, we still persist in the attempt to control and manage that which, more than anything else, derives its "sweetness and perfume" from "Liberty alone." The withdrawal of "funk" money because of the absence of reason for "funk" should be a matter for congratulation, and should be quickly followed by the deposit of new money arising out of the prosperity of the foreigner.

The bureaucratic grip upon our activities still tends to tighten. If Chambers of Commerce, farmers, shipowners, and others continue to demand Government assistance in fields where government is out of place, that grip must get tighter still. There are those who hold that confidence and management can go together. To my mind the two things are wholly incompatible, and I believe that the rapid development of the new science of management as exemplified in the Exchange Equalisation Fund and recent legislation is in part responsible for the continued weakness of confidence.

The ordinary man, rightly, shrinks from a market where the largest and most powerful operator is a newcomer, full of theories, but devoid of experience, whose avowed object is not to secure income, or to make profit, but simply to defeat the law of supply and demand.

From the mass of dialectical generalities about the practice of control and management, two, and only two, small but significant facts have emerged. The first is that the Issue Department has ceased to be a source of profit to the Treasury, and has made a loss of £9,000,000: secondly, £86,000,000 has been placed to a Reserve in the Equalisation Account, indicating that in the opinion of the managers, losses are not to be ruled out even in the holy of holies of the new economics. The situation was admirably summed up by an American correspondent who wrote "We don't know where we're going, but we're getting there all right."

ANOTHER FIVE MILLIONS.

Coming to the details of our own business, which, of course, hang upon these wider considerations, I am happy to report that the total of the new Policies written during 1938 exceeded for the second time the sum of £5,000,000, and improved a little upon the record figure established by us in 1937.

OUR FUND.

We can claim another record for the year just passed in that for the first time in our history the normal annual addition to our Life Assurance Fund had reached the seven figure mark. We add to the Fund the handsome sum of £1,030,020.

CLAIMS.

The Institution paid out in 1938 £1,510,143 in claims arising by death, by maturity, and by surrender. This figure is three times the average of the previous 97 years, and provides striking evidence of growth, but it is even more interesting as evidence of the value of life assurance as a method of investment. If each of the claims paid during 1938 is considered as part of an estate, whether large or small, it is safe to assume that the life assurance item was, in most cases, the only one that realised the full value attached to it.

EXPENSES OF MANAGEMENT.

The Directors are happy to report that notwithstanding the continued growth of the new business undertaken, the ratio of management expenses to premium income has been reduced by .2 per cent.

THE BONUS.

I have left until the last the important question of the valuation and distribution of Bonus.

You will see from the printed Report that the Actuary puts the present value of the liabilities under all contracts at £23,193,585.

We can pride ourselves upon being able to maintain our reserves for both old and new contracts upon the same stringent basis as before. We then come to the Life Assurance Annuity and Capital Redemption Fund which is shown as £25,198,836, without taking into account in any way the £1,000,000 Reserve Fund. There is thus a surplus of assets over liabilities of £2,005,251, of which £400,377 was brought forward from the previous valuation.

It requires the sum of £1,633,201 to allot bonuses at the same record high rates as declared ever since 1927, and there remains the sum of £372,050 to be carried forward undivided.

Throughout the Triennium, the inroads into the Funds made by the Death Claims have been light and this has been a powerful factor in the production of the surplus available for distribution to members.

The Institution has a fine history of large bonuses, and the declaration of a steady rate for the past twelve years, during which period the prices of gilt-edged stocks have jumped up and down like the shoddiest of industrial shares, is proof of the stability which you secure when your money is invested in this Institution.

The report and accounts were unanimously adopted.

London Amusements

MATINEES

All at 2.30 unless otherwise stated.

APOLLO.	**Gas Light.**	Tues. & Sat.
COLISEUM.	**Varieties.**	Sats.
COMEDY.	**Room for Two.**	Tues. & Sat.
DUCHESS.	**The Corn is Green.**	Wed., Sat.
GARRICK.	**The Mother.**	Thur., Sat.
GLOBE.	**We At the Crossroads.**	Wed., Sat.
MERCURY.	**The Playboy.**	Fri. & Sat.
PALACE.	**Under Your Hat.**	Wed., Sat.
QUEEN'S.	**Dear Octopus.**	Wed. & Sat.
ST. JAMES.	**Geneva.**	Wed. & Sat.
SAVILLE.	**Worth a Million.**	Thurs. & Sat.
SAVOY.	**Robert's Wife.**	Wed., Sat.
WESTMINSTER.	**Doctor's Dilemma.**	W.& S.
WYNDHAM'S.	**Quiet Wedding.**	Wed. & Sat.

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Tues.,	Mar. 14th, 8.30.	FIDELIO (last performance during the season).
Wed.,	Mar. 15th, 7.45.	THE SNOW MAIDEN.
Thurs.,	Mar. 16th, 8.30.	BALLET — CARNAVAL, APPARITIONS, FACADE.
Fri.,	Mar. 17th, 7.45.	DER ROSENKAVALIER.
Sat.,	Mar. 18th., 2.30	BALLET — LES SYLPHIDES, THE GODS GO A' BEGGING, LE LAC DES CYGNES, Act 3.
Sat.,	Mar. 18th, 7.45.	AIDA.

THEATRES

APOLLO. (GERrard 2663)
Evenings, 8.30. Matinees, Tues. & Sat., 2.30
GAS LIGHT
GWEN FFRANGCON-DAVIES

COMEDY. Whi. 2578. Evgs., 8.30. Tu., Sat., 2.30.
ELSIE RANDOLPH, HENRY KENDALL and HUGH WAKEFIELD in
ROOM FOR TWO

DUCHESS. (Tem. 8243.) Evgs., 8.30. Wed., Sat., 2.30.
SYBIL THORNDIKE and EMLYN WILLIAMS in
THE CORN IS GREEN
A Comedy by EMLYN WILLIAMS.

GARRICK. (Tem. 4601). Evgs., 8.30. Thur., Sat., 2.30
LOUISE HAMPTON
in **THE MOTHER**
KAREL CAPEK'S LAST PLAY.

GLOBE. Ger. 1592. EVGS., 8.30 sharp.
Mats., WEDS. and SATS., 2.30 sharp.
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JACK HULBERT and CICELY COURTNEIDGE in
UNDER YOUR HAT

QUEEN'S. Ger. 4517. Evgs. at 8.15 sharp.
Mats., Weds. and Sats., at 2.30.
MARIE TEMPEST. JOHN GIELGUD in
DEAR OCTOPUS. By DODIE SMITH.

ST. JAMES. (Whi. 3903.) Evenings at 8.15.
MATINEES, WEDNESDAY, SATURDAY, 2.30.
BERNARD SHAW'S play of the moment
GENEVA

SAVILLE. Tem. 4011. Evgs., 8.30, Thur., Sat., 2.30.
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WORTH A MILLION
A Farce in 3 Acts by Vernon Sylvaine

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ELIZABETH ALLAN FRANK LAWTON MARIE LOHR.

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March 13th. 6.25 and 9. Mats., Sat., 2.30.
Charlie Kunz; Ballets de la Jeunesse; Murray & Mooney; Eve Becke; Jack Daly; Arnaud, Peggy & Ready; Stump & Stumpy; Erikson; Six Hoffmans; Cecil Johnson, etc.

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Jacques Feyder's thrilling tale of Circus life.

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WALTER CONNELLY in
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Commencing Monday, March 13th, from 10 a.m.
ADOLPHE MENJOU in
"KING OF THE TURF"
Thereafter Continuous daily from 10 a.m.

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DANCE IN AID OF THE
CECILE BOOYSEN CLINIC
AT NEW BURLINGTON GALLERIES.
From Nine till Two. Bar. Dress optional. Tickets 5s., from TESSA VAN SOMEREN, 25 Whitehall Park, N.19, or at the door.

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The Fleet Street Choir.

Speakers: BISHOP OF CHELMSFORD, Mr. GEORGE LANSBURY, M.P., Mr. H. H. ELVIN, Miss VERA BRITTAIN, Dr. CYRIL BAILEY, Miss E. M. TANNER

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F.P.S.I. PROF. C. E. M. JOAD on the theme of the lectures: "THE GOOD LIFE AND THE LIBERAL TRADITION." Wednesday, March 15th, at 8 p.m., at the large Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1. Tickets: Members, 6d.; non-Members, 1s. From HON. SECRETARY, F.P.S.I., 4 Fitzroy Street, W.1.

PROF. HALDANE on "HEREDITY, CHEMISTRY AND POLITICS," Conway Hall, 8 p.m., March 14th. Organisers: British Association of Chemists. Admission free.

PUBLIC DEBATE. "COLLECTIVE SECURITY VERSUS ISOLATION." Monday, March 13th, 8.15 p.m., Town Hall, Marylebone Road.

PRELIMINARY NOTICE
F.P.S.I. EASTER CONFERENCE
will be held at St. Christopher's School, Letchworth, Herts, April 6th–11th. Speakers include C. E. M. Joad, Barbara Low, Frank Hardie, Dr. Adrian Stephen, Hugh Franklyn, and a speaker on the popular front. Inclusive fees for whole period: Members, 45s.; non-Members, 50s. Immediate application for accommodation advisable to HON. SEC., Federation of Progressive Societies and Individuals, 4 Fitzroy Street, W.1. ('Phone: Mus. 6975).
Full programme to be announced later.

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Sunday, March 12th. Doors open, 6.30.
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SYDNEY ELLIOTT, G. R. STRAUSS, M.P., ANEURIN BEVAN, M.P., and TED WILLIS will speak.
The Rt. Hon. Sir Charles Trevelyan in the chair.
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THE ETHICAL CHURCH, Queensway, Bayswater, W.2. Sunday, March 12th, at 11 a.m., MR. BLACKHAM: "COLLECTIVE AND INDIVIDUAL BEHAVIOUR." 6.30 p.m., DR. G. P. GOOCH: "THE OUTLOOK IN EUROPE."

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, Holborn. Sunday, March 12, at 11 a.m., PROFESSOR T. H. PEAR, M.A., B.Sc.: "THE SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY OF EVERYDAY LIFE." 6.30 p.m., Concert Chamber Music. Admission free. Visitors welcome.

THE SEX EDUCATION SOCIETY. Lecture to be held at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, Holborn, W.C.1., on Monday, March 13th, at 8 p.m. Symposium of Speakers on "Sex and Crime." Mark Benney (author of *Low Company* and *The Scapegoat Dances*): "Sex in Prisons." Dudley Collard (Barrister-at-Law): "Sex and Crime in the U.S.S.R." Dr. Kate Friedlander: "Sex and Stealing." Dr. Emanuel Miller: "Sex and Juvenile Delinquency." Dr. H. D. Jennings White: "Can Sex Education Reduce Crime?" Dr. D. W. Winnicott: "Manifestations of Crime in very Young Children." Chairman: Dr. Norman Haire. Members free. Non-Members 2s. Tickets may be obtained at Hall on evening of lecture.

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